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# TSÊNG KUO-FAN AND THE TAIPING REBELLION

WITH A SHORT SKETCH OF HIS  
LATER CAREER

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**TO  
MY FATHER, MY MOTHER,  
AND MY WIFE**



## FOREWORD

There is much to be done in bringing the history of China to the knowledge of the Western world which thus far has been content with information acquired mainly through imperfect summaries of her annals. As is the case with Chinese painting, the beauty and importance of which have quite recently been disclosed to students of art, the material for a proper understanding of Chinese history is abundant and adequate for research by scholars equipped for the work. The importance of the task is a challenge to the scholarship of the coming generation. Dr. Hail's study of the Taiping Revolt only makes a beginning; it stands by itself thus far as an example of what may be accomplished by applying the science of historical method, developed wholly in the West, to a subject the material on which is entirely Chinese. No one without the advantage of his double equipment—in the handling of the matter and understanding of the language—could hope for the success he has achieved in this volume. Its importance to Chinese scholarship is as great as its contribution to Western comprehension, for in the examination of the evidence and its dispassionate presentation he reveals to the Chinese a chapter in their own history in a way emphatically unlike their accustomed records. Moreover, it must be added, twenty years' residence and study in China have endowed him with both sympathy and soundness of judgment. The criticism of Young China is disarmed here when it discovers an impartiality that discredits at once the exist-

ing prejudice against the Manchu Dynasty, which listens to no good about its servants, and the rather preposterous contention that foreigners in the end put down the Rebellion.

The significance of this Revolt in the middle of the nineteenth century is not fairly estimated either by its magnitude or suppression. Other uprisings in Asia have been as widespread and as wasteful; we have to go back to Darius or Harsha to discover one on a similar scale that was as completely crushed by one organizing genius. The discomfiture of the Taiping movement is a significant indication of race character that places the Chinese high in the ranks of civilized nations. After years of disastrous mismanagement by incompetent officials the people were prompted to support the wearisome process of raising a volunteer army and to endure punishment from desperate enemies until they could effect their extermination. Tsêng, the proponent of this plan, hardly finds his prototype anywhere in modern history. Dr. Hail compares him with Washington, whom he resembled in character. The American hero, however, was rewarded for his great services by becoming head of the state he had led to independence. With Tsêng there was no question of a supreme position as recompense of his exertions. He remained faithful to the empire, and, though the dynasty he had saved proved undeserving in the end, he lives in the hearts of his people as the type of inviolate loyalty, *sans peur et sans reproche*. To reveal to the world abroad, which has never known him, one such instance of devotion and untarnished honour brings to us a new realization of the potential in Chinese culture.

F. W. WILLIAMS.

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## MAPS

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## INTRODUCTION

MANY careful observers of world events believe that no calamity of the nineteenth century approached the Tai-ping rebellion in the total of misery and destruction. Several hundred district cities were taken and retaken, with looting and slaughter on both sides. Great cities became wildernesses; fruitful fields, deserts. Sanguinary battles and still more bloody massacres marked its progress. It threatened disruption to the empire and downfall to the emperor. In his *Middle Kingdom*, as late as 1882, S. W. Williams says of this group of insurgents:

Their presence was an unmitigated scourge, attended by nothing but disaster from beginning to end, without the least effort on their part to rebuild what had been destroyed, to protect what was left, or to repay what had been stolen. Wild beasts roamed at large over the land after their departure, and made their dens in the deserted towns; the pheasant's whirr resounded where the hum of busy populations had ceased, and weeds or jungle covered the ground once tilled with patient industry. Besides millions upon millions of taels irrecoverably lost and destroyed, and the misery, sickness, and starvation which were endured by the survivors, it has been estimated by foreigners living at Shanghai that, during the whole period from 1851 to 1865, fully twenty millions of human beings were destroyed in connection with the Tai-ping rebellion.

That it was allowed to spread so far and wide was due to Chinese decentralisation and official incompetence; that the fanatical insurgents did not win was due to their lack of leadership from 1853 to 1858, and to the

emergence of Tsêng Kuo-fan. Chinese modern history awards this man the honor that is his due, but foreign observers were so dazzled by the fame of the valuable little force of foreign-trained soldiers organised by Frederick Townsend Ward and eventually led by "Chinese" Gordon, that they have immortalised the "Ever Victorious Army" of three thousand men, almost canonised Gordon, and relegated the real hero of the Tai-ping rebellion to oblivion.

Seldom has a greater injustice been done than that which filched from Tsêng Kuo-fan his dearly earned fame and enshrined Gordon and Li Hung-chang in the temple of history. Against difficulties woven together out of the practices of Chinese government for centuries; with far too little coöperation; lacking funds to secure armies—his total expense for more than ten years being limited to slightly more than a paltry 21,300,000 *taels*—and without any military skill whatever; Tsêng eventually performed the miracle of suppressing this immense rebellion. This he did through clear thinking, unfailing patience, prudence, and common sense. He never feared that others would eclipse him, he begrudged no man his fairly earned laurels; and gathered able men around him through whose talents he made up for his own lack of military skill. Taking Confucius seriously, and attempting to put into his own conduct the qualities of the Princely Man, Tsêng was never willing through danger or loss of "face" to swerve from the line of duty. He was plain-spoken, straightforward, and, in a time when dishonesty was usual, honest.

A Japanese biographer has, I learn, preceded me in comparing him, not to Napoleon,—whom he did not in the least resemble,—but to George Washington. He was indeed the Washington of the Far East, who through his personal worth and his adherence to the path marked

out by reason and conscience, preserved China from division or destruction through years of uncertain struggle against overwhelming odds. A Chinese essayist of today, Liang Ch'i-ch'iao, claims that he was not merely a man whose like has been seen but a few times in the whole long history of the Middle Kingdom, but a man "of whom the whole world has produced but a handful." If that praise is too high, we may at least rank him amongst the great characters of the nineteenth century and do no injustice to the rest.

The strident voice of youthful China finds fault with him as the upholder of the alien Manchu Dynasty and of absolute monarchy. So he was. Monarchy and all forms of imperialism are as unpopular in China today as in Europe, but is it fair to judge a great hero by ideals that first entered the minds of his countrymen a full generation after he had been gathered unto his fathers? Must we not rather place ourselves in the surroundings of the age in which Tsêng lived and labored, when he uttered the voice of the universal conviction of the nation? In addition to their pre-dating a disdain for monarchy, these youthful critics fail to consider that if no one had then been found strong and faithful enough to hold the empire together it would, in all probability, have been cut to pieces through civil war, eventually to have fallen into foreign hands—for strong nations were at that moment building empires. That China continued in unity and independence until another mood came over the Western lands is a result of the successful suppression of this and other insurrections by Tsêng and the able men who coöperated with him.

This study was first presented as a dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the doctor's degree in Yale University, and covered the Taiping period alone. To render it more complete I have added a short

sketch of the last seven years of Tsêng's life. This includes chiefly his preparations for the suppression of the Nien rebels, which made possible Li Hung-chang's rapid conquest of the troublesome horde, and the service as viceroy in Nanking and Chihli. From the superabundant materials found in his letters I have gathered together what seem to be the most significant principles by which his life was inspired. It seemed desirable also to insert the chapter on the government of China under the Manchu Dynasty, so that the rise of such a movement as the Taiping Rebellion from such small beginnings might be more intelligible. In order to make these changes possible, much detail regarding the different campaigns has been omitted.

Chinese names of persons and places are hard to romanise. There are several systems by which this is done. For places I have tried as far as possible to follow the post office lists. For other names I have taken the Wade system. But there are some exceptions in each group. Some names are so generally written in one manner that it would seem pure pedantry to change them.

If in some way this study will serve to bring before Westerners a fair understanding of the great rebellion, and of the man to whose devotion and loyal services its suppression is due, the writer will feel amply rewarded. It is only a beginning, however, and there is need for more careful study from Chinese materials of the whole period covered here when foreign relations were becoming constantly more important in Chinese history. We have seen far too much of the period through Western eyes alone, and it is not thus that history can be properly understood.

May I record my profound gratitude to Professor F. W. Williams of Yale University under whose direction the study was made, whose suggestions have guided

## INTRODUCTION

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the revision, and the loan of whose rare pamphlets and books supplied very valuable material; also to Professor K. Asakawa for suggestions and help in some of the translations, to the Reverend G. G. Warren of Changsha for useful advice in recasting some of the chapters, and to Tso Fu and other members of the faculty of Yale-in-China for help with the Chinese texts.

W. J. H.

Changsha, China,  
November, 1926.





# CHAPTER I

## CHINESE GOVERNMENT UNDER THE MANCHUS

### A. *Military.*

WHILE the Taiping rebellion was still in the process of incubation, when as yet small companies of prowling bandits or congregations of religious enthusiasts were too weak to threaten the empire or even upset a province, the authorities would be expected to bend every effort to check them. But they seemed to be completely paralysed. The imperial soldiery proved utterly incapable of checking the bands of lawless men that ravaged the countryside of southern Hunan, Kwangtung, and Kwangsi at will. Yet on paper at least the viceroy of the Two Kwang had at his command eighty-nine thousand soldiers exclusive of officers, 22,532 in Kwangsi and 66,907 in Kwangtung. In fairness we must add that 55,401 were enrolled particularly for garrison or police duty; but even so almost 34,000 infantry and cavalry remained to form a field army—sufficient to drive out all the bandits that had appeared before 1849.<sup>1</sup>

The explanation of this weakness lies in the studied division of power which had been made by the reigning

<sup>1</sup> In the preparation of this account of the army I have relied chiefly on the articles of Thomas F. Wade in vol. XX of the *Chinese Repository*. Wade drew largely from Chinese sources, and at the very time the rebellion was breaking out. Parker in his *China* also has a good account of the army.

dynasty, both in the military establishment and the civil service. So far as the army is concerned this division began with the national organisation which consisted of two distinct sets of officers and soldiers, organised on altogether different principles and possessing different privileges, namely the Eight Banners and the Tents of the Green Standard.

Before the Manchus commenced their struggle against the Ming Dynasty, as early as 1614, their forces were organised into eight divisions of approximately 7,500 men each led by a *tut'ung*. This was the nucleus of the Eight Banners under which all the Manchus eventually came to be enrolled.<sup>2</sup> Each division was subdivided into regiments of 1,500 men each, and these into battalions of 300 men.<sup>3</sup>

In the actual conquest of the land, however, the Manchus were aided both by Mongolian and Chinese troops, many of whom were assimilated into the Eight Banners after the country was pacified. At first these were enrolled with the Manchus, but as their numbers increased it was deemed wiser to arrange them into separate groups. Accordingly, in 1635 the Mongols were organised into Eight Banner divisions, their number totalling 16,840 men, and seven years later the Chinese who had participated in the conquest from the beginning were similarly enrolled in Eight Banners.<sup>4</sup> Of the latter there were 24,050 men. The total Banner force was therefore about a hundred thousand at the end of the conquest. Thence-

<sup>2</sup> The Eight Banners were divided into two divisions, superior and inferior:

The three superior Banners:	{	Bordered yellow.	The five inferior Banners:	{	Bordered white.
		Plain yellow.			Plain red.
		Plain white.			Bordered red.
					Plain blue.
					Bordered blue.

<sup>3</sup> Article in *Journal North China Branch Royal Asiatic Society*, new style, XXII, 3-5.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

forth they became the nucleus of the army of occupation, being particularly necessary to guard the palace, the city of Peking, Chihli, and the northern and northwestern frontiers. Their numbers gradually swelled to more than two hundred thousand, an overwhelming proportion of which were in Manchuria, Turkestan, and Chihli.<sup>5</sup> They inherited their rights to enrollment.

The primary aim of holding firmly the imperial domain of Manchuria and the metropolitan province against attacks from Mongolia and Turkestan was apparent. The Chihli garrisons were so distributed as to form a cordon about the capital, while the large garrisons in the northwestern provinces of Shensi, Kansu, and Shansi were vital outposts. In the other parts of China garrisons were generally placed in the provinces where a viceroy lived, except in the distant Yunnan-Kweichow.<sup>6</sup> Kwangsi, Hunan, Kiangsi, and Anhui, having governors only, were

<sup>5</sup> The figures for 1850, based on the statistics of 1825, but approximately correct, give the following totals:

<i>Grand divisions</i>	<i>Officers</i>	<i>Privates*</i>	<i>Supernumeraries†</i>	<i>Artificers</i>
Chihli, 16	7,919	131,493	31,694	2,538
Manchuria, 4	1,086	41,350	1,138	1,568
Turkestan, 1	289	13,576	504	128
<hr/>				
Total	9,294	186,419	33,336	4,234
<hr/>				
The other provinces of China proper	1,297	49,595	8,088	1,011
<hr/>				
Grand total	10,591	236,014	41,424	5,245

\* Privates: including non-commissioned officers.

† Supernumeraries: those eligible to active service, from whom promotions were made.

But of the numbers in China proper, Shensi (1 division), Kansu (6 divisions), and Shansi (3 divisions) had about half, leaving the other half for eight provinces. The above tables are from the *Chinese Repository*, XX.

<sup>6</sup> Owing possibly to the fact that this was originally given as a fief to Wu San-kwei, and was too far away, after the rebellion, to be held by a small force.

without Banner troops, while the garrisons in Honan, Shantung, and Ssuch'uan were relatively small. At K'ai-feng the total was less than a thousand officers and men; in two camps in Shantung, one at Tsingchow and another at Tehchow, were stationed about 2,600, and the whole vast province of Ssuch'uan contained but 2,528 men and 222 officers in the camp at Chengtu.<sup>7</sup>

Along the Yangtse River it was somewhat different. Realising the need for controlling that great waterway, garrisons were placed in Hupeh at Kingchow, where the outlet from Ssuch'uan could be controlled and Hukwang overawed, at Nanking, and at Kingkow. The totals for these places were: Kingchow, 6,292 men and 516 officers, Nanking, 3,122 men and 369 officers, and Kingkow, 1,596 men and 147 officers.

The two coast provinces, Chekiang and Fukien, were under two Tartar generals, one at Kanchow with 1,970 men and 270 officers, supplemented by a marine garrison having 1,526 men and 104 officers at Chapu; the other similarly had a land garrison of 2,000 men with 209 officers and a small marine camp with 39 officers and 475 men. The province of Kwangtung had a total of 4,599 men and 249 officers, all of them at Canton.<sup>8</sup>

The command of all these Banner troops in the provinces was, except in the case of Shantung and Honan, lodged in the Tartar general who ranked above the viceroy and was directly responsible to the capital, although the support of his troops had to be furnished by the province in which they were stationed. The two provinces having no Tartar general, Honan and Shantung, had

<sup>7</sup> All these figures are those given by Wade, in 1850, from records of 1825.

<sup>8</sup> Parker in his *China* gives different totals: Honan, 820, Shantung, 2,926, Ssuch'uan, 1,500, Hupeh, 5,168, Kiangsu, 4,000, Chekiang, 5,700, Fukien, 3,060, and Kwangtung 6,400. Map opposite p. 256. He does not cite his authorities.

Bannermen with officers of the second grade under the governor. In Peking these Bannermen were under a special board of twenty-four *tut'ung* or lieutenant generals, each representing one of the twenty-four Banners, and subject to the Board of War.

The individuals composing the hereditary class from which this force was made up were further ranked into two classes, inner and outer, according to the relation they bore to the reigning family. The former were specially designated to service in the imperial and princely households, the latter were free to serve in the army or civil government outside. Practically every adult male Manchu was in some way enrolled under the Banners, either as a soldier or employee of the civil service. Every one enrolled in the superior three Banners received support whether he went into government service or not,<sup>9</sup> while those in the inferior received stipends only when actually serving in the active or supernumerary ranks.

We are now able to realise the nature of the Manchu force. Around the capital and in the regions where danger might be expected, it formed the chief imperial reliance. There it still had some bravery and virtue to its credit. In the interior provinces it served chiefly as an independent garrison of the ruling race, under separate control, ready to forestall or oppose any sign of usurpation on the part of the viceroy or governor at his own capital, but without value for warfare. In such places the Bannermen were "practically honourable prisoners, rigidly confined within the limits of the city walls in the midst of a hostile population, speaking a dialect which Bannermen must learn in addition to their own if they wish even to purchase a cabbage in the streets; and the Tartar General, who nominally outranks the Chinese Viceroy, is often sneeringly regarded as an 'old frump' or a

<sup>9</sup> Mayers, *Chinese Governments*, pp. 51 f.; *Chinese Repository*, XX, 252.

'drunken swab.'<sup>10</sup> That this picture must be somewhat modified to admit some excellent Tartar generals and brave soldiers, Parker himself confesses, but contends that his indictment is true in the main.

We can, indeed, scarcely exaggerate their uselessness, not only as a fighting force, but even as a defensive arm. The most striking proof of their degeneracy is found in the behavior of the Manchus when the Taipings took Nanking in 1853.<sup>11</sup> The garrison of paid Manchu forces at that place amounted to 5,106, indicating a total adult population of twenty or thirty thousand. The Taipings stormed the outer walls and met with some resistance from Chinese soldiers, after which they proceeded to attack the Manchus in the Tartar city within. Of this attack Meadows records:<sup>12</sup>

These Manchus had to fight for all that is dear to man, for the Imperial family which had always treated them well, for the honour of their nation, for their own lives and for the lives of their wives and children. This they well knew, the Heavenly Prince having openly declared the first duty of his mission to be their extermination. It might have been expected, therefore, that they would have made a desperate fight in self-defense, yet they did not strike a blow. It would seem as if the irresistible progress and inveterate enmity of the insurgents had bereft them of all

<sup>10</sup> Parker, *China*, p. 247.

<sup>11</sup> The account here given is taken from Meadows, *The Chinese and their Rebellions*, pp. 168 ff. He took care to get the exact truth on his visit to Nanking, a few weeks after his capture, but his informers were probably rebels only.

<sup>12</sup> The chief imperialist account of this event, *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, II, 26, says that the Tartar city was held for two days after the outer city had fallen, and that not soldiers alone, but also women stood on the walls at various points and aided in the defence. During the Opium War the Manchus at Chinkiang resisted the British in the same desperate fashion when attacked. Loch, *Narrative of Events*, p. 106. This tends to throw some doubt on the indictment quoted above from Meadows, but does not prove the usefulness of the Manchu garrisons, outside the Tartar city at any rate.

sense and strength, and of all manhood; for they threw themselves on the ground before their leaders and piteously implored for mercy with cries of Spare my life, Prince!—spare my life, Prince! . . . The insurgents who described their conduct declared that not one, old or young had been spared.

Whether those in Chihli were actually much better is very doubtful, for, when the comparatively small force of Taipings, sent north after the capture of Nanking, reached the borders of that province, the emperor had to send for Mongol tribesmen to hasten to the rescue of Tientsin under their formidable leader Senkolintsin.<sup>13</sup> Assuredly enough Bannermen were to be found in Chihli to rout the insurgents if they had been skilled in war. And, useless as it was, this Banner force was a serious drain on the provincial revenues. Careful tables by Wade<sup>14</sup> show that the pay and allowances of officers and men for the Banners in China proper amounted to a grand total of 13,785,020 *taels*<sup>15</sup> per annum, or, with Manchuria, Ili, and Turkestan included, just under sixteen million *taels*. If the tables of Parker are correct, this represents more than a third of the entire receipts for the pre-Taiping years and at least half of the expenditures which he includes.<sup>16</sup>

Considering now the Chinese army, we find at the outset one striking difference in the fact that this was drawn

<sup>13</sup> *Peking Gazette* for Nov. 7, 1853.      <sup>14</sup> *Chinese Repository*, XX, 404.

<sup>15</sup> A *tael* is an ounce of silver, Chinese weight. The standards are local, but in general are about an ounce and a third. Here the standard is the Treasury *tael*.

<sup>16</sup> Parker, *China*, pp. 198 f. The receipts are given in this budget as *taels* 46,871,000 and expenditures as *taels* 31,522,800. He reckons the entire army expenditure at only *taels* 19,599,100 and believes that the Bannermen at Peking require only two or three millions. I am inclined to think that his budget only includes payments for Peking, Manchuria, Mongolia, and Turkestan, but not those for the provinces, which were paid by the provincial treasuries.

by voluntary enlistment from all parts of the empire. Officers might be Manchus or Chinese, but the rank and file were native, and it was evenly distributed through the eighteen provinces. When we think of it as a national army we are apt to be led astray. Peking did, indeed, have control of the appointment of officers of higher rank; but once established in his command, the officer had full charge of his own men and they formed practically an independent force, yet dependent, by an intricate system of checks and balances, on other officers and on civil rulers in the provinces. There was nothing to correspond to the unity of command found in national armies of the west.

This Chinese force, known as the Luh Ying, "Tents of the Green Standard," dates back to the pre-Manchu period when those invaders were struggling for power. Like the Banner troops its organisation was made on the basis of 7,500 men to a major division. Whether the minor divisions were in exact correspondence to those of the Banners is not clear, but is probable. When Shunchih established himself in Peking, we are told that there were at least three Chinese armies with no less than 150,000 men, fighting for him under native generals in the provinces.<sup>17</sup> Some of these were assimilated into the Banners, as we saw above, but many were left out and became the nucleus for the Green Standard. It may be recalled that the new dynasty in the beginning of its career, created four princes from the four chief Chinese generals who supported them, namely, Wu San-kwei, Kêng Chung-ming, Shang K'o-hsi, and K'ung Yu-teh, and granted them fiefs in the southern part of China, in Yunnan, Kwangtung, Fukien, and Kwangsi respectively.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Chinese Repository*, XX, 252 f. *Journal North China Branch Royal Asiatic Society*, n. s. XXII, 3-5.

<sup>18</sup> Li Ung-bing, *Outlines of Chinese History*, pp. 358-368. Cf. J. Ross,



Under the leadership of Wu San-kwei and the two other surviving princes, Yunnan, Kwangtung, and Fukien broke out in revolt in 1673. They were successful for a time, and held most of southern and western China in their grasp, also some of the north; but met their match in the energetic young K'anghsi (1662-1722), who was destined to rank among the greatest rulers of China. A long war between the able General Wu and the powerful emperor raged until 1678, when Wu died while besieging Yunghsing, Hunan, and the rebellion gradually simmered down. But it left serious results behind. The Manchus henceforth reformed their plan of government in the Chinese territories by scattering the authority within the province between civil and military officials, and among different grades of officials within each group.<sup>19</sup>

The development of that policy in the reign of K'anghsi and of the succeeding emperors had portioned out the civil and military power in any province to at least two or three and at most to eight or ten different centers of authority. On the military side the viceroy and governor had indirect control of all the provincial troops through their control of the provincial treasury. But each had direct command only over the five or six thousand men in his guard.

The Tartar general stationed in or near the capital city of the viceroy checked the latter with a force of nearly equal size, and outranked him in the national capital. Similarly the governors were checked by the highest provincial military officer the *t'ituh*, who was nominally in command of all the provincial forces, and, in the military hierarchy, had the same grade as the

*The Manchus*, p. 453. The prince of Kwangsi died early, committing suicide, and left only a daughter who did not succeed to the principality. However, she married the Tartar general of that province and thus secured a measure of control.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 368 f.

governor. Occasionally the *t'ituh* was at the provincial capital, but oftener he was at a large city in another part of the province. These three independent commands, that of the viceroy or governor, that of the Tartar general, and that of the *t'ituh*, were the three major groups.

But in reality even the *t'ituh* found his power hampered by the officers below him, the *tsungping*, or commanders of divisions. Although the latter could communicate to the war department in Peking only through the *t'ituh*, and in theory accepted the latter's orders, they were actually urged rather than commanded. They formed, in fact, practically independent units, stationed at various places, from which they could be moved with great difficulty. For they were generally associated with civil officials of corresponding rank, the *taot'ai*, or intendants, and their forces were distributed here and there at strategic centers in the principal cities, towns, and market places. These small forces were of great value for the minor civil officials, but any attempt to collect them together into larger units would leave the regular authorities helpless, exposed to just such difficulties as the bandits raised in Kwangsi from 1847 to 1850. These authorities would be slow, therefore, to allow them to leave the walls of the city where they were stationed.

In the central provinces there were other complications in the army of the Green Standard. The director general of grain transport, controlling the Grand Canal, and the superintendents of the rivers, Yellow and Yangtse, all had soldiers of this force under their command.

From the standpoint of K'anghsi this was an ideal system. In practice it could only work out if the various commanders, civil and military, were in complete harmony. But this was contrary to human nature, and the various commands were never able to work together very well. In fact, K'anghsi had ordered it so that they never

could join together to rebel against Peking, and for this purpose it was admirable.

In practice, therefore, the Green Standard was only slightly less static than the Banners. We must abandon the idea that the governor or the *t'ituh* could call together a large force in any given emergency. The commands were so divided and scattered, that at most the capital and important cities could be defended. The Green Standard was far more useful for garrison duty than for service in the field. They might help in putting down mutiny in other commands, a viceroy's force, for example, helping to prevent mutiny in a *t'ituh's* or *tsungping's* command; or they might be used to put down minor disturbances in the country places. As against great bodies of rebels it was difficult, if not impossible, to bring together a force strong enough, except by recruiting new soldiers; and if that were done, coöperation among the different officers was even harder to secure.

The proportion of infantry, cavalry, and garrison troops differed from province to province, but in fourteen provinces the garrison forces outnumbered the other two combined. In 1850 the total for China was: cavalry, 87,100, infantry, 194,815, garrison, 336,404, in all 618,319. By provinces they were distributed as follows:

Province	Divisions or Commands	Stations	Total cost, taels	Cavalry	Infantry	Garrison	Totals
Chihli,	10	138	1,575,360	12,829	12,049	24,311	49,108
Shansi,	3	53	419,850	4,496	7,469	13,668	25,633
Shantung,	5	41	568,720	3,572	2,087	19,217	24,876
Honan,	3	35	315,660	2,563	.....	11,033	13,596
Kiangsu,	8		954,080				
Anhui,	2	89	113,470	4,126	10,433	31,251	45,810
Kiangsi,	3	38	262,150	982	2,010	7,787	10,779
Chekiang,	7	62	846,950	2,196	10,791	23,572	36,739
Fukien,	11	78	1,398,470	3,786	24,869	32,780	61,435

<i>Province</i>	<i>Divisions or Commands</i>	<i>Stations</i>	<i>Total cost, taels</i>	<i>Cavalry</i>	<i>Infantry</i>	<i>Garrison</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Kwangtung,	11	95	1,463,860	2,183	22,108	42,616	66,907
Kwangsi,	4	47	522,400	1,505	8,222	12,805	22,532
Seuch 'uan,	7	79	888,240	4,036	11,511	18,289	33,836
Hupei,	5	42	533,450	2,572	5,218	14,262	22,052
Hunan,	4	53	608,720	2,262	7,065	16,477	25,804
Shensi,	7	92	1,023,407	12,390	17,589	12,085	42,065
Kansu (E & W),	9	116	1,395,110	22,493	23,358	10,829	56,680
Yunnan,	9	53	875,870	2,538	17,229	15,477	35,244
Kweichow,	6	67	728,330	2,571	12,807	29,765	45,143
			Extra 168,000				
Totals,	114	1,178	14,662,650	87,100	194,815	336,404	618,319

In order of precedence the cavalry stood highest, soldiers being promoted from one branch to the other.<sup>20</sup>

The military officers were recruited in the same way as civil officials, no distinction being made between army and navy. In addition to admission through the examinations, whereby military masters and doctors were eligible to appointments, claim to office might rest on four grounds: hereditary rank in the national nobility from the grade of duke down, including fifth official rank; sons of officers brevetted because of their father's rank; sons of officers brevetted because of the violent death of the father in the service of the country; and promotion from the lower ranks for efficiency.<sup>21</sup>

Claim to office and actual appointment were, however, two distinct matters. Three methods of making appointments were followed. In certain of the grades, especially from lieutenant up to lieutenant colonel, men who had been chosen in the regular way were sent out into the

<sup>20</sup> The tables are taken from the *Chinese Repository*, XX, the summary being on page 365. We must remember, of course, that this represents the number paid for. The rolls were heavily padded, without doubt.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 294 ff.

provinces to await vacancies. In certain of the provinces<sup>22</sup> a second method was for the viceroy, governor, or *t'ituh* to recommend men for promotion from the active lists, practically on the basis of seniority. In these provinces it was understood that for each time men were so promoted the other method should be used before making another promotion. A third method was to grant appointments by way of promotion for worth or merit alone. For the grades below lieutenant colonel the head of the provincial government might make the selection, for the higher ranks the appointment came from Peking on recommendation of these officers. Sometimes in the case of those engaged in warfare, promotion or promise of promotion came as a special reward for bravery in the field.

Military officials were graded exactly as their colleagues on the civil side, but were considered to be somewhat lower, grade for grade, because they represented merely physical prowess instead of learning and culture. The following list gives the name of the official, his grade and the number of men he commanded:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>English equivalent</i> <sup>23</sup>	<i>Command</i>	<i>Number of men</i>
1 b	T'ituh	General or Admiral-in-chief	<i>piao</i>	7,500 in theory; actually 5,424 on the average
2 a	Tsungping	General or admiral of divisions.	<i>piao</i>	7,500 in theory; actually 5,424 on the average
2 a b	Fuchiang	Brigadier general or commodore	<i>hsieh</i>	uncertain number
3 a	Ts'anchiang	Colonel or captain	<i>ying</i>	525 on the average
3 b	Yuchi	Lieut. colonel	<i>ying</i>	
4 a	Tussu	Major or commander	<i>ying</i>	

<sup>22</sup> Hunan, Shensi, Kansuh, Ssueh'uan, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Yunnan, Kweichow, and Fukien.

<sup>23</sup> These tables and equivalents are from Wade's articles in the *Chinese Repository*, XX, 366-390. Mayers, *Chinese Government*, pp. 59-61, gives different equivalents, placing them one step lower in each case below brigadier general.

<i>Grade Title</i>	<i>English equivalent</i>	<i>Command</i>	<i>Number of men</i>
5 a Shoupei	Captain or lieutenant	<i>ying</i>	
6 a Ch'ientsung	Lieutenant	<i>shao</i>	half a <i>ying</i>
7 a Patsung	Sergeant or ensign	<i>shao</i>	half a <i>ying</i> or <i>ssu</i>
8 a Wai-wei ch'ientsung	Second Sergeant	<i>shao</i>	half a <i>ying</i> or <i>ssu</i> { fifty to 100 men
Wai-wei patsung	Corporal		
9 b Er-wai wai-wei	Lance corporal		

Narrowing our consideration to the provinces of Kwangtung and Kwangsi, where the Taiping rebellion arose, we find that there was an establishment of fourteen divisions, distributed in 142 encampments with a total complement of 3,688 cavalry, 30,330 infantry, and 55,421 garrison troops; but with so many divisions and encampments as to give an average of less than 240 cavalry and infantry and 390 garrison soldiers to each. If these small *ying*, each of less than 650 men all told, were scattered about throughout the two provinces—practically an immobile force, scarcely more than a constabulary—what wonder that the rebels had a chance to multiply and grow strong amongst the hills and mountains?

Its defects were chiefly revealed when emergencies required large bodies of men. Then the officials were unwilling to part with their feeble apportionment of the forces, while their superiors were anxious to avoid, if possible, the extreme outlays of money necessary to engage auxiliary troops, or fill up the complement even of men supposed to be enrolled. Each magistrate, whose tenure of office at best was precarious, would try, either by concealing the seriousness of a rising in his district, by buying off the bandits, or in some way by persuading them to move to some other district, to avoid reporting to the governor any such uprising till it was fairly out of hand. Similarly, the governor, hoping against hope that in some way it might be crushed or driven outside the

province to another jurisdiction, would also conceal its serious character from Peking.

Reasons for such concealment lay in the fear of dismissal for incompetence in letting a disturbance spring up under one's very eyes, and in the fear of financial loss. Every official, civil or military, had to make heavy outlays in connection with appointment and investiture. Naturally he regarded this outlay as capital invested from which he must secure the profits during his term of office. Dismissal or heavy expenditures for emergencies endangered his financial career, sometimes beyond repair.

In the armies a favorite method of corruption among the commanders was to charge to the provincial government the wages and allowances of a full quota of soldiers and horses, whilst actually keeping but a fraction of this number in service, and scaling down the legal allowances of those who remained to the lowest possible point. The three kinds of troops were therefore constantly undermanned and were largely composed of elderly and incapable men. When an inspection drew near or if the necessities of the case required larger armies, strong countrymen or laborers would be recruited for the occasion. With insufficient drill they took their places in the ranks as the actual fighting force.<sup>24</sup> Among the complaints raised by Chinese critics themselves, to show the central government why their soldiers could meet neither Taipings nor foreigners, the following counts appear. In the first place, the ranks are not kept full, officers reporting to their superiors only the numbers and not the names of the soldiers on their lists, thus making it impossible to check them. Pay was therefore drawn for soldiers who

<sup>24</sup> The article by Wade quotes from several of the censors to this effect, and these complaints are summarised in this paragraph. *Chinese Repository*, XX, 419 ff.

had no existence. In the second place, drill was neglected, making the men actually employed count for very little. Third, the officers used the men in the ranks as menials; they moreover filched from them some of their rightful pay and allowances, thus driving them into league with bandits and robbers. Fourth, they were often recruited from among the vagabonds, a circumstance that had the same effect as depriving them of their pay, or at least helps to account for their worthlessness and incapacity. Once more, many of them, owing to lack of drill, of knowledge of archery, or the use of firearms, or to their general incompetence, were cowards who ran from the enemy.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, substitutes were employed, who had little heart in the task and deserted at the first chance.

Allowing for exaggerations, this picture is gloomy enough. The war against the British had revealed the fatal defect of this force, yet no apparent effort had been made to remedy the evils of the system. Even the supernumeraries called in to augment the forces at Canton in 1839-1842 had been disbanded, and the government had no good troops to oppose to the well-drilled but poorly armed followers of the Taipings. Even when imperial commissioners were hurried to the scene as virtual dictators (but without power to raise revenues and hence deprived of one of the prime essentials of a dictator), or the Tartar general was ordered from Canton to take the field in person, they were without sufficient strength. An entirely new army had to be devised, and this was the work accomplished by Tsêng Kuo-fan.

### B. *The Civil Government.*

If the military establishment thus failed to meet the need in a crisis, the civil government was not a whit

<sup>25</sup> In the early stages of the rebellion Chow T'ien-chieh wrote to this effect to the governor of Hupeh. His letter is given in chapter VI.



better. For it, too, was organised on the principle of dividing the power among many rather than concentrating it into the hands of a few.

In the capital two great bureaus shared the responsibility for administration. The grand secretariat which stood at the head in the Ming Dynasty was now the lesser of the two, having been transformed into an imperial court of archives with four secretaries, two Manchus and two Chinese, two assistant secretaries, a Manchu and a Chinese, and ten assistants. Its duty was to secure information of all that was happening throughout China that through it the head of the state might be in touch with the subordinate governing bodies.<sup>1</sup>

Above it stood the Manchu council of state. Originating as a military council, the latter had developed into a privy council which took precedence over the grand secretariat.<sup>2</sup> Daily, between the hours of four and six in the morning, its meetings were held to transact affairs of state. Its membership ordinarily consisted of five ministers who held office in some of the executive departments. While the grand secretariat was a means of communication, this body was the highest source of authority under the emperor.

The executive department consisted, as in the earlier dynasties, of six boards, each headed by two presidents and four vice presidents, half of them Manchus and half Chinese. In addition, the boards of revenue, war, and punishments had superintendents. These six boards were: (1) The Board of Civil Office, with four bureaus, directing the civil service of the empire; (2) The Board of Revenue, with fourteen departments, having control of the territorial government and the revenues; (3) The

<sup>1</sup> Mayers, *Chinese Government*, pp. 14 f.; Williams, *Middle Kingdom*, I, 417, 419.

<sup>2</sup> Mayers, pp. 12 f.

Board of Rites, with four departments, attached to which was the bureau of music; (4) The Board of War, with four departments, directing military affairs, and, until the end of the century, the navy and postal service; (5) The Board of Punishments, which coöperated with the Censorate and the Grand Court of Revision, to review the decisions of provincial judges, and (6) The Board of Works, with four departments, having general charge of public works all over China.<sup>3</sup>

Two special departments must be added to the above list. One of these, which arose out of the relations between China and Mongolia, was the Mongolian superintendency, organised like the six boards, but having only a single president. Prior to the separate organisation of a department of foreign affairs Chinese relations with Russia were under its jurisdiction, in addition to affairs of Mongolia, the Mohammedan Begg, and the tributary tribes beyond the borders of China.<sup>4</sup>

The second of these was the Censorate, which coöperated with the Board of Punishment and the Court of Revision, to revise criminal cases and consider appeals. But even more important than this was its service as a board of inspectors keeping close watch over the deeds of officials, both at the capital and in the provinces. It made recommendations to the throne concerning the punishment of those worthy of censure, holding over the heads of inefficient or corrupt officials degradation or even dismissal.<sup>5</sup> Suggestions for reforms of abuses also originated with this body.

Not until after the war with the allies did the need for a distinct foreign office make itself felt. Compelled then to open up the country to diplomatic intercourse, a special council rather than a department was organised.

<sup>3</sup> Mayers, p. 17; Williams, I, 421-428.

<sup>4</sup> Williams, I, 429 f.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 431 f.

This was known as the Tsungli Yamen. Its members, ten in number at first, were taken from among the presidents and vice presidents of the various boards, including a majority of the Council of State. In a sense, therefore, it might be considered as a committee of that supreme body. Routine work was carried on by a staff of secretaries borrowed at first from the Council of State. Under this Council of Foreign Affairs the viceroys of Chihli and Nanking were designated as superintendents of trade.<sup>6</sup>

Thus the central government showed, instead of departments heading up in one responsible chief, boards, a cabinet, and a council each having a committee at the head. In all likelihood the actual power was exercised by a few men, but on paper at least it was widely scattered. On the whole this cumbersome machinery appears to have done its work fairly well.

In provincial government the Manchus appear to have adopted the arrangements of their predecessors with modifications. The great rulers of this foreign dynasty avoided the mistake of the Mongols in trying to rule directly, and worked with and through the Chinese. The fifteen provinces of the Ming period were increased to eighteen by dividing Shensi into Shensi and Kansuh, Kiangnan into Kiangsu and Anhui, and Hukwang into Hupeh and Hunan, but their former unity was somewhat preserved by placing these divided areas under the same viceroy. Manchuria was also divided into three divisions, which, at the time we are considering, were all on a military basis. Fêngtien, the first to become organised into a regular province, did not receive this new government until 1876.

Over the eighteen provinces of China proper were eight viceroys and sixteen governors. The eight vice-regal domains were: 1. Chihli. 2. The two Kiang, com-

<sup>6</sup> Mayers, pp. 15 f.

prising Kiangsu, Kiangsi and Anhui—the name arose when as yet Kiangnan was undivided. 3. The two Kwang, Kwangtung and Kwangsi. 4. Hukwang, Hupeh and Hunan. 5. Ssuch'uan. 6. Minche, Fukien and Chekiang. 7. Shenkan, consisting of Shensi and Kansuh. 8. Yunkwei, the provinces of Yunnan and Kweichow. In Chihli and Ssuch'uan the viceroy ruled directly, while in Shantung, Shansi, and Honan the governor ruled without being associated with a viceroy.

The viceroy or governor general held honorary position as a president of the Board of War *ex officio*, and as a junior president of the Board of Censors. The highest civil authority in the province was vested in him and he had special power over the military forces. In the period of struggle with the foreigners preceding the Opium War, he was sometimes superseded by a special official called an imperial commissioner, who had no administrative power within the province, but who represented the emperor for specific purposes and ranked above the viceroy. Sometimes—it was frequent during the Taiping rebellion—a viceroy would be granted the additional title of imperial commissioner in order to strengthen his position.

The executive duties of the office were shared by two staffs, one civil and one military. They furnished employment for the numerous expectant officials. These expectant officials were men who had gone through the routine of qualifying for office, many of them already having paid the fees for nomination, and were ranked as expectant magistrates, prefects, or intendants already designated to the province where they were to serve and put on waiting lists from which actual appointments were to be made. But some of them had to wait many months or many years without actually receiving an office, and from these expectant officials the viceroys and governors, and

even lower officials, recruited their chief secretaries. While direction of civil matters rested chiefly on the viceroy there was a special military secretariat having charge of the purely military functions of the office.<sup>7</sup>

One step below the viceroy in rank was the governor. At Peking he held honorary position as vice president of the Board of War *ex officio*, and a similar position in the Censorate. His actual duties are hard to distinguish from those of the viceroy. Where the two existed side by side in the same province they did not, apparently, stand in the relation of superior and subordinate, but rather in that of junior and senior partners. Like the viceroy, the governor had the power of life and death; he reviewed criminal cases. He was expected to oversee the conduct of the lower officials. All communications with the capital must be sent by lower officials through the governor, who with the viceroy, or separately, had the right to memorialise the throne.<sup>8</sup>

As we have already noted above, a military official, the Tartar general, shared high rank with these two officers in some of the provinces. If he was present with the governor and viceroy the three formed a special provincial council which deliberated on matters arising in connection with the provincial administration, to which council subordinate officials might be summoned.<sup>9</sup>

Below these highest officials were three, and in some cases four, provincial officials residing at the capital. They were the treasurer, judge, grain intendant, and salt controller.

Of these the treasurer ranked as a lieutenant governor, generally taking over the seals of office in case of a temporary vacancy. In the early part of the Ming Dynasty he

<sup>7</sup> See Williams, I, 438.

<sup>8</sup> Mayers, p. 33.

<sup>9</sup> Williams, I, 440.

had been the civil governor,<sup>10</sup> but now his duties were altogether financial.

The provincial judge exercised the chief judicial functions of the province, reviewing the decisions of the magistrates' courts. Together with the treasurer, the judge was supposed to be consulted on matters of civil appointment. But the limitation of the right of memorialising the throne brought it about that the viceroy and governor usually decided on all appointments and dismissals and only secured the consent of these two lower officers *pro forma*. In routine matters they made recommendations to the governor or viceroy. It is perhaps not altogether inappropriate to say that the four formed a provincial council of administration, holding in their hands the entire executive, legislative, judicial, and deliberative power. They composed, in fact, "the government."<sup>11</sup>

The salt controller was found in all the provinces, because the operation of the salt gabelle was universal. His duties were not territorial, but purely fiscal.<sup>12</sup>

In twelve of the provinces a grain intendant had charge of the taxes received in grain and forwarded to Peking. In the other provinces his duties fell to the treasurer.

One other important provincial officer, usually a man of very high rank, was the literary chancellor. He had general charge of educational matters and examinations in the province, being assisted in the M.A. examinations by special examiners sent from Peking to hold them at the provincial capital.

In general we may agree with Parker that each province was a complete satrapy, "in no way dependent upon any other state, except in so far that the poor ones dun the rich ones for the money which the central govern-

<sup>10</sup> Mayers, p. 33.

<sup>12</sup> Mayers, pp. 38 f.

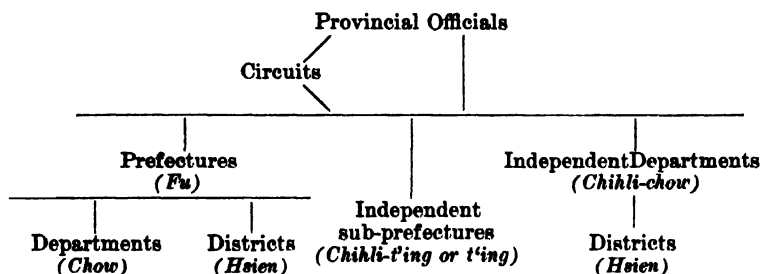
<sup>11</sup> Parker, *China*, p. 164.

ment 'appropriates to them.' Each province has its own army, navy, system of taxation and its own social customs. It is only in connection with the salt trade and the navy that mutual concessions have to be made under a certain modicum of imperial control. In nearly all other matters the viceroys or governors 'move' each other; and occasionally different provinces jointly interested in special questions, after thus 'moving' to a preliminary understanding, address the Emperor or the Board together." Under the necessities of the menacing foreign relations and of the needs of the navy, more unity was secured towards the end of the century than during the Taiping days.

While they possessed this amount of independence, the officials were checked in two directions. On the one hand, men from the central government were in the provinces keeping quiet watch over the higher officials, while they in turn had men similarly observing the lower officials in the districts. On the other hand, the gentry at the capital and in the larger towns, aided by the various popular organisations in villages and country districts, prevented the officials from becoming despotic or encroaching upon the customary rights of the people. None of the officials of the grade of district magistrate or above were permitted to serve in their own provinces. This rule, aimed to prevent the consolidation of official and popular interests to the detriment of the reigning house, carried out its purpose to some extent, but at the same time introduced into the civil government the same fatal weakness that characterised the military service, disunity and impotence. In times of great disturbance such as we are now studying, it effectually prevented the concentration of the national resources on the support of the armies in the field.

Within the province there was the same division of

power that obtained between provinces. There were six subdivisions of a province, one of them fiscal, the others territorial: (1) circuits, chiefly fiscal; (2) prefectures; (3) independent sub-prefectures; (4) independent departments; (5) departments subject to a prefecture; and (6) districts subject to a prefecture or independent department. A diagram may make their relationships clear.



The chief official of the circuit, generally known as the *taot'ai*, was officially known as the intendant of the circuit. He had a slight amount of control over two or more prefectures and was granted extensive military authority within his jurisdiction (whence the alternate title *ping pei tao*). Whenever he was located at a port of entry the administration of the maritime customs usually fell into his hands and in this connection he was styled the *hai-kwan chien-tuh*. His rank was usually assimilated to that of a foreign consul and, where no special bureau of foreign affairs existed, the *taot'ai* at a treaty port had general oversight of foreign affairs, subject to review by the governor or viceroy on more important issues.

The chief officer of the prefecture was called the *chih fu* or prefect. His duties are not clearly outlined, but he had some power in matters of judicial review. He is perhaps best described as a supervisor and means of communica-



tion between the higher provincial authorities on the one hand and the *chow* and *hsien* districts on the other.

Over the *t'ing* or independent sub-prefecture was placed the *t'ung chih*. The same term was also applied to the official subordinate to the prefect, and several special officers also bore the title. Some of these were given military power, others were in charge of water communications, and still others were placed over districts inhabited by aboriginal tribes. There were also revenue-police sub-prefects and police sub-prefects.<sup>13</sup> Ranking with these independent sub-prefectures were the independent departments; but the ordinary department, though different in name, was in reality practically the same as the district or *hsien*.

The presiding officials of the *chow* and *hsien* were the lowest functionaries appointed directly from Peking, and they were the ones who actually presided over the affairs of the common people and came in contact with them. They were the centers both of imperial and of local government—the lowest imperial officer and the “father and mother” of the people. Professor Parker well summarises their duties thus, speaking of the *hsien*: “He is judge in the first instance in all matters whatsoever, civil or criminal, and also governor of the gaol, coroner, sheriff, mayor, head surveyor, civil service examiner, tax collector, registrar, lord-lieutenant, oedile, chief bailiff, interceder with the gods; and in short, what the people always call him, ‘father and mother’ officer.”<sup>14</sup>

Of the various ways in which he secured office we cannot speak here. Purchase was one of the commonest methods. Tsêng Kuo-fan in one of his letters speaks about a friend who had purchased a *hsien* magistracy at a cost of 7,000 strings of cash and a *chow* magistracy for

<sup>13</sup> Meyers, pp. 35 f.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

about 8,000.<sup>15</sup> Theoretically he was appointed on the basis of the examinations. In the performance of his multifarious duties he was surrounded by four classes of subordinates, having charge respectively of matters of general administration, secretarial duties, inspection and revenue, and the maintenance of order. Below them were those harpies, the *yamen* runners, who brought misery into the lives of all those who were so unfortunate as to fall into their hands.

The chief sources of income in a district were the profits which the magistrate could squeeze out of the taxes and the administration of justice. There were pickings in the way of "inquests (blind eyes), licenses, permits, presents from gentry, transfers of land, posts, storage of official grain, purveyances, etc."<sup>16</sup>

While local government thus headed up in the magistrate, the actual power was very largely in the hands of the people themselves, or, perhaps more correctly, of the local gentry. The police functions of a countryside were under the care of the *t'uan-tsung* or *lien-tsung*. The peace and well-being of a village or countryside were largely in the hands of a *ti-pao* or *pao-cheng*. This person, who, together with the *t'uan-tsung*, represented the people, was not an official but had great importance in local government. He endeavored to prevent cases from reaching the regular officials by attempting to settle "out of court" matters involving trespass, financial disputes, divorces, and other difficulties where mediation could be accepted. In connection with other village heads the *ti-pao* could exercise many of the minor duties of government which the Chinese system left to local enterprise.<sup>17</sup> It was possible for him to exercise much influence for

<sup>15</sup> A string of cash, or one thousand cash, varied in exchange value, but was in general equivalent to a dollar or more.

<sup>16</sup> Parker, pp. 173-175.

<sup>17</sup> Douglas, *Society in China*, pp. 111-113.

good, but if his own standard of conduct was not high his power for evil was considerable. He could easily use his position to levy blackmail on and shield vice.<sup>18</sup> The *ti-pao* served as buffers between the populace on the one hand and the officials on the other; without doubt they have had much influence throughout the long history of China to prevent despotism and too great encroachment on the rights of the people.

This slight sketch possibly helps to make clear how difficult it was to bring the resources of the whole province or of a group of provinces together against a formidable rebellion. Each viceroy or governor was left measurably independent, yet carefully watched. Similarly the districts and departments through the prefectures were separately kept under slight control from the provincial capital. All through China we find authority separately delegated, and little interference was tolerated in the actual administration. The power of removal was the chief weapon of the higher source of authority. None of the districts or departments could work together except in roundabout ways through the provincial capital, there being little or no direct communication between magistrates or between prefects. On the side of the people most matters of daily life and of neighborhood life were settled without reference to the officials, and every magistrate was compelled to limit his actions by this ancient customary practice. Thus civil government, admirably devised to scatter power and insure imperial supremacy, worked well only when profound peace reigned. It broke down in times of war because coöperation and combination were too difficult.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

## CHAPTER II

### ORGANISATION OF THE GOD-WORSHIPPERS.

WHEN we seek the causes for such a mighty upheaval as the Taiping rebellion, many points of weakness in the government suggest themselves at once. But those causes were inherent in the organisation of the military and civil services, and we are compelled to examine more closely into the particular circumstances which prevailed in the southern part of China if we would attempt to understand the movement.

The decade which ended with the outbreak of the Taiping rebellion had been marked by military disaster and natural calamities. A relatively small force of outer barbarians, in the so-called Opium War (1839-1842), had wrested victory from the imperial commissioner at Canton and made its triumphant way along the coasts and into the Yangtse River, eventually to wring from the Manchu government, at Nanking, a treaty of peace with recognition of full equality.<sup>1</sup> This war was a shock to the nation at large, revealing as it did the emptiness of Chinese pretensions and the weakness of their military arm.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Consult Williams, *The Middle Kingdom*, or Morse, *International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, for good accounts of this war.

<sup>2</sup> Such men as Tsêng at Peking were carefully watching this war. Several times he writes home about the progress of events. When the British were at Nanking he wrote: "The English barbarians are at Kiangnan and peace is already decided on, because Kinling is the throat as between the north and south. Since it is already taken by the English we are com-

At once the disbanded soldiers of Kwangtung scattered out among their villages and hillsides to take up their peaceful occupations again or to engage in the more exciting pursuit of robbery. These must inevitably have regaled their friends and companions with fearful tales of Western prowess, of the superior foreign guns and their unheard of tactics, until they came to regard those strangers with awe, if not with affection. But, watching the foreigners at close range in Canton, they discovered that the foreigner who had made imperial commissioners tremble could not secure admission to the city, the turbulence of the population being adduced as the chief cause for this refusal. A common saying arose. "The populace fears the officials," it ran, "the officials fear the foreigners, and the foreigners fear the populace."<sup>3</sup> As to the last statement the fact was that, out of a consideration for the interests of trade, the question of entering Canton had been waived for the time being, though it was to reëmerge, in connection with the incident of the lorch *Arrow* in 1856, as an unsettled issue. Nevertheless, the humiliation of the Manchus in the Opium War led reflective minds to wonder if the Chinese themselves, in a national uprising, might not drive back their inefficient soldiery and set a native prince on the throne.

Such an object lesson could not fail to make its impression on the revolutionary brotherhoods that existed in China. Some of these combined political aims with definite religious teachings; others were more completely

pelled to adopt a peaceful policy instead of one of force, to quiet the people and turn off the army. . . . Since the English stirred up trouble two years have elapsed; the officers have not been skillful enough and the soldiers have not obeyed orders, to the great injury of the country, etc." *Home Letters*, Oct. 20, 1842.

<sup>3</sup> *Yueh Fen Chi Shih*, I, 1.

anti-dynastic, with a membership that had to act in secret because of government spies who were on the alert to ferret out and destroy all such subversive organisations. Only half a century before, one of these fraternities, the White Lily Society, had fomented a rebellion which raged in several provinces of the west and northwest and even penetrated central China. From 1796 until 1804 the government had its hands full in suppressing this outbreak. The White Lily Society had first sprung up as a protest against Mongol usurpation. It languished under the native Ming Dynasty, but revived when the Manchus overthrew them.<sup>4</sup>

Another of these secret orders was the Triad Society, sometimes called the Society of Heaven and Earth. This organisation was distinctly anti-Manchu, a product of the first century of Tartar domination in China; it was especially strong in Kwangtung and Kwangsi, the very region where the Taipings first arose. With the avowed purpose of restoring the Ming Dynasty to power it had a widely scattered membership, bound together by solemn oaths, and only awaited a favorable opportunity to overthrow the alien government. We shall later consider its relation to the Taipings in the early days of that movement. The Triads, or a branch of their order, held Shanghai for three years, from 1853 to 1856, but were unable to come to terms with the religious fanatics in power at Nanking. It is only a fair assumption that these societies, not to mention many others with similar aims, noted the Manchu weakness against the Westerners and believed that their long-awaited opportunity had come.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Li Ung-bing, *Outlines of Chinese History*, pp. 489 ff.

<sup>5</sup> De Groot, J. J. M., in the second volume of *Sectarianism and Religious Persecution in China*, chapter XVII, 536-556, traces this movement to sectarian persecutions, particularly those in Hunan in 1836 and the following

To this foreign war and its influence on thinking men, on peasants near Canton, and on secret brotherhoods, we must add a series of calamities in the years 1846 and 1847. The failure of the crops in portions of Hunan and Kwangsi led to the rise of robber bands from among the distressed people.<sup>6</sup> In some cases these were small and inconsequential, but in others large bodies of men numbering hundreds and even thousands, under influential leaders, gave to district magistrates and even to provincial authorities, much anxiety.<sup>7</sup>

Against these quasi rebels, the drill and even organisation into armies of the country militia had been directed. The adoption on a large scale of this type of militia, organised into armies similar to that first led by Kiang Chung-yuan, enabled Tsêng Kuo-fan to put down the re-

years. The unrest resulting from these persecutions led the different religious groups to unite in this movement. There is much to be said in favor of this view, but De Groot is so persuaded of its correctness and sufficiency that he rejects as pure fabrication the story of Hung Siu-ch'üan's visions, which he considers to be Hamberg's. In so doing he leaves us baffled at the subsequent control of the movement by the group that entertained such fanatical semi-Christian views as made them incapable of combining in friendly coöperation with various persecuted sects, in the way his theory presupposes. He does not sufficiently emphasise the fact that the most of the persecutions were actually directed against the revolutionary societies who disguised themselves by claiming religious objectives.

<sup>6</sup> *Yueh Fen Chi Shih*, I, 1.

<sup>7</sup> A typical Chinese account of this period is found in the Records of the Shanhua Hsien (which included a part of Changsha, Hunan): "The province of Kwangsi has many bandits concealed within its borders. In the twenty-seventh year of Taokwang [1847], there was a severe famine, and robbers sprang up on all sides. The governor, Chen Tsou-tseng, was old, ill, and yielding [literally, inclined to religion], and could not suppress them. At the same time Hunan ruffians, Lei Tsai-hou and Li Yuan-hua, year by year stole into and harassed the borders of the Kwang [provinces]. Though the lesser bandits suffered the penalties of the law, the more important chiefs were not destroyed. In the Kwang [provinces] were Ch'eng A-kwei, Ou Tsou-yun, Shan Chu-chien, Shan Yang-tu and Yen Ping-yao, whose bands each numbered several thousand. Relying on their strategic bases in the hills, they preyed on the people."

bellion eventually. The Taipings themselves emerged from this 'volunteer movement' in Kwangsi.<sup>8</sup>

Along the coasts, moreover, pirates abounded, whose depredations not only affected Chinese vessels, but those under foreign flags as well. They became so troublesome that at last British warships were sent against them in 1849, which succeeded in destroying fifty-eight of their junks near the Kwangtung coast; within a month of that time a large body of rebels was fighting with government troops in Kwangsi, only a few days' march from the place where this took place. Inasmuch as many of the pirates were still armed when forced ashore, it is a natural supposition that they either joined the Taipings or fomented disorder on their own account. Such characters as these might be expected to ally themselves with the Hakka population who lived in that part of Kwangsi,<sup>9</sup> and it was apparently among the Hakkas that the societies of God-worshippers from whom the Taipings came were first organised.<sup>10</sup>

A more general cause for such a movement was the character of the reign of Taokwang. This monarch was indeed asleep if he did not see the signs of general stagnation and decay in the once powerful empire of K'anghsi and K'ienlung. The sale of offices and titles increased, armies became less and less capable; a debased currency proclaimed approaching bankruptcy, pirates and bandits increased in boldness as they increased in numbers, and provincial independence became more pronounced. The general paralysis of local and national government, made evident to all through the ridiculous

<sup>8</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Meadows, T. T., *The Chinese and their Rebellions*, pp. 147-148. His belief is that they started the rebellion.

<sup>10</sup> The Hakkas were the newer settlers, bearing somewhat the same relation to the older families, the P'enti, that the immigrants of the twentieth century do in New England to the descendants of the Pilgrims.



failure of the foreign war and the inability to cope with local uprisings, offered a loud challenge to any man of surpassing ability to raise his standard and attempt the restoration of a Chinese dynasty; for all recorded history had taught that when a reigning line of emperors is about to pass from the stage, just such a period as that of Taokwang presages its doom. Indeed, a foreigner in 1849, observing the universal disorder and lack of leadership, recorded his belief that a great civil war was approaching.<sup>11</sup> Nor was he mistaken, for already the Tai-ping rebellion, as yet small and not differentiated from other disturbances, was under way in the hills of Kwangsi.

The man who eventually occupied the rebel throne in Nanking under the title of *T'ienwang*,<sup>12</sup> was of Hakka origin, dwelling in Hwahsien, a district of Kwangtung not far from Canton. His name was Hung Siu-ch'üan, and he was one of three brothers. Born in 1813, he was enabled through the efforts of the family to spend his youth in study. Several times he competed in the provincial examinations, only to meet with failure.<sup>13</sup> In 1836, while he was at the examinations, a set of Christian books came into his possession which he did not then examine. After another failure in the year 1837, he fell ill and had to be carried home in a sedan chair. During this illness he saw the visions which in later years he insisted were revelations from God.

In these visions he was carried to heaven, where, after

<sup>11</sup> Meadows, p. 122, “. . . judging from what we do know positively, we are entering on a period of insurrection and anarchy that will end sooner or later in the fall of the Manchoo dynasty. . . .”

<sup>12</sup> That is, the Heavenly King or Prince. He refused to use the term for emperor, because to him it was sacrilege to use the character *t'ien*, implying Deity.

<sup>13</sup> The number of graduates was fixed, and failure did not imply insufficient training.

being washed in the river and having a new heart placed within him, he was ushered into the presence of a venerable old man who sat on a throne. This man addressed Hung, saying: "All human beings in the whole world are produced and sustained by me; they eat my food and wear my clothing, but not a single one among them has a heart to remember and venerate me. What is, however, still worse, they take of my gifts, and therewith worship demons; they purposely rebel against me and arouse my anger. Do not thou imitate them." He then gave him a sword wherewith to exterminate demons, a seal having power to overcome the spirits, and a yellow fruit sweet to the taste. Hung at once set about converting those who were standing in the hall, but even there he found some who were indifferent to him or hostile. When the old man led him to the parapet of heaven and bade him gaze on the earth, the sight of its evil and depravity moved him greatly. In several other visions of the same kind he received further instructions, frequently meeting there a middle-aged man whom he learned to call his elder brother. Likewise he met there the sages of antiquity, and once he even heard the old man reprove Confucius himself for having failed to make him known in the classics.

From such visions he awoke filled with wrath at the evil practices and false beliefs of men, and zeal to exterminate the lying spirits and bring China back to the right way. On such occasions his relatives and friends kept a close watch on him, for they feared that he was mad. Notwithstanding the vividness of these trances, their effect, so immediate and powerful during the course of his illness, faded out entirely after his recovery, when he began the career of a schoolmaster. The only outward effect of the illness was to change him from a cheer-

ful, companionable young man into a grave and dignified teacher.

Only by an accidental circumstance six years later did the memory of the visions revive and become a permanent force within him. One of his cousins named Li happened to be looking over Hung's library one day, when by chance he picked up the set of volumes Hung had received in Canton in 1836. Impressed by their unusual character, he borrowed and read them. When he brought them home he persuaded Hung to read them. The effect was instantaneous and powerful, for they opened to Hung's understanding the meaning of the visions he had seen during his illness. The venerable old man was none other than God; the elder brother was Jesus; the idols in the temples and shrines were the false demons. Hung had been commissioned to restore the worship of the true God.<sup>14</sup> To his mind the visions and books independently confirmed each other. Accepting the duty thus doubly laid on him, Hung and his cousin baptized each other, and Hung began to preach the new doctrines. His first converts were a neighbor, Fêng Yun-shan, and his own cousin, Hung Jen-kan, or Hung Jin, to give him the name by which he was known to Westerners through Hamberg's account. Both of these men became *wangs* in the new kingdom, Fêng in the formative period, and Hung Jin many years later, a little before the movement collapsed.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The tracts were issued in 1832 by Liang A-fah, a convert of Dr. Morrison, and bore the title "Ch'üan Shi Liang Yen" (Good Words Exhorting the Age). Some of them contained translations or paraphrases of chapters in the Bible; others, essays or sermons. Not more than thirty chapters of the Bible were given, but texts were selected from as many others. The whole would give a rough summary of Protestant teachings.

<sup>15</sup> All the information here recorded about the visions and the later movements of Hung and his colleague Fêng, are taken from Theodore Hamberg's *The Visions of Hung-siu-tsuen and the Origin of the Kwang-si Insurrection*, Hong Kong, 1854. The information there given was furnished

After encountering opposition from the people of his native village, Hung resolved to go with Fêng Yun-shan to preach the new doctrines elsewhere. Accordingly they set out in 1844 and eventually reached the Kwei district, Kwangsi, where they were hospitably received by a kinsman named Wang and entertained by him until Hung was no longer willing to impose on his relative's bounty. He therefore sent the rest of the party back to Hwahsien, intending to follow them in a short while. Without any previous consultation with his senior colleague, Fêng now turned aside from his companions and went to "Thistle Mount," which he made his headquarters for the next few years, planting religious communities known as the God-worshippers, and achieving great success. By the time the rebellion was launched, these societies were numerous in several prefectures and districts located in eastern Kwangsi, along the river that flows to Canton. At least a few scholars and men of influence were among the members, but the rank and file were chiefly from the Hakka peasants and the Miao tribes among the hills.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, Hung Siu-ch'üan returned to Hwahsien, where he was surprised not to meet Fêng. Again he settled down quietly to his old task of teaching, spending his leisure hours in religious reflections which bore fruit in several pamphlets, subsequently to be the theological textbooks of the Taiping state. While he was thus cultivating his scholarly tastes a preacher from a Protestant mission in Canton, Moo by name, came to Hwahsien. Through him Hung learned of the missionaries and their

by Hung Jin, who after the rebellion broke out escaped to Hong Kong, where he became an evangelist, remaining there for several years until he joined the rebels at Nanking. Some assert that during his stay in Hong Kong Hung Jin was a servant in a foreign home.

<sup>16</sup> The Miao are a non-Chinese group of aborigines pushed back into the hills by the Chinese conquests. Many are to be found in southern Hunan also.

work, which led to a visit, in 1846 or 1847, and a period of instruction for Hung and his cousin, Hung Jin. Through some misunderstanding, however, they left without receiving baptism.

About the middle of 1847 Hung decided to make another trip to Kwangsi and visit the region where he had preached three years earlier. Here—apparently for the first time—he learned of the great work accomplished by Fêng Yun-shan, whom he now decided to visit at “Thistle Mount.” But on arriving there he learned that Fêng was in prison. So he set out at once for Canton to intercede on his behalf with the viceroy there, basing his plea on the foreign treaties which granted religious liberty. Unsuccessful in this quest, Hung hastened back to Kwangsi, there to discover that Fêng had been liberated and had gone in search of Hung. Again Hung went to Hwahsien, and there he found that Fêng had been there, but had just returned to Kwangsi. Instead of continuing to pass and repass each other Hung remained at home, until in the tenth moon, 1849, Fêng came there once more and took him to Kwangsi to head the Taiping rebellion.

Following this account of Hung Jin alone, we are led to the view that Hung Siu-ch’üan was not an active factor in the organisation of the religion brotherhoods of God-worshippers, and the Chungwang in his autobiography tells us bluntly that Fêng Yun-shan “was the originator of the project for setting up a government, and was the prime mover in the affair.”<sup>17</sup> He also states that the project was known but to six men besides the T’ienwang.<sup>18</sup> In the next chapter I shall consider this

<sup>17</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> “The desire to establish a kingdom was a deeply conceived plan, known only to the Eastern king, Yang Siu-ch’ing, the Western king, Hsiao Chao-kwei, the Southern king, Fêng Yun-shan, the Northern king, Wei Ch’ang-hui, the Assistant king, Shi Ta-k’ai, the supreme minister of state,

question as to the founder of the movement; from both Hung Jin and the Chungwang it is certain that if Hung knew of the purpose at all, which I doubt, he had very little to do with the actual work of bringing it to fruition.

The troubles of 1846 and 1847 afforded the occasion for organising the new religious brotherhoods into companies of militia. With bandits and robbers from the famine region going freely to and fro, and with no adequate military resources available, the people of the villages throughout these provinces were drilling and forming themselves into military companies to defend their countryside from pillagers. The God-worshippers also organised themselves into military units, but carefully avoided joining the other volunteers. There was an abundance of zeal and a shade too much rivalry between the various parties, but the total effect was to increase their enrolment very materially.<sup>19</sup>

As early as 1848 these new military companies were in conflict with imperial soldiers, though it is probable that nothing more resulted than minor skirmishes. In this year their cause passed through some kind of serious crisis, one fraught with peril to them, followed by a deliverance that appeared little short of miraculous. Its exact nature we are only able to surmise, but the subsequent references to this year point to two things; first, a series of conflicts with the authorities, and second, an

Tsin Jih-ch'ang,—six men,—aside from whom not a single person knew that the T'ienwang contemplated a political movement." *Ibid.* (My own translation.)

<sup>19</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 3, "For some years after the promulgation of the new doctrine, no apparent movement was made. In the 27th and 28th years of Taokuang, however, when the banditti were ravaging the surrounding places and the volunteer movement was set on foot, the worshippers formed themselves into a body, distinct from the volunteers. Each party pursued its own course and endeavored to surpass the other, which finally led to a great disturbance, and the augmentation of the number of worshippers."

inner transformation of their movement into a great cause which resulted in bringing Hung forward as leader. It also brought about the supposed intervention of God the Father, who inspired Yang (later King of the East), and Jesus the Saviour who spoke through Hsiao (King of the West). Two or three of these accounts may throw some light on the crystallisation of the Taiping movement.

. . . in the Mow-shin year [A.D. 1848] the great God compassionated the calamities of the people, who had been entangled in the meshes of the devil's net; on the third month of that year [April], the great God and supreme Lord came down into the world: and in the ninth month [October] Jesus, the Saviour of the world, came down, manifesting to the world innumerable acts of power, and slaughtering a great number of impish fiends in several pitched battles: for how can impish fiends expect to resist the majesty of Heaven?<sup>20</sup>

The nature of these manifestations of divine power is more clearly indicated, perhaps, in the following extract from the proclamation sent to the British in 1858:

7. In the third moon of the year, "Mo-shin" [1848], Shangti descended,
8. And commissioned the King of the East to become a mortal.
9. In the 9th moon of the same year the Redeemer descended,
10. And commissioned the King of the West to manifest divine powers.
11. The Father and Elder Brother led us to sit on [the throne of] the heavenly kingdom;
12. With great display of authority and might to sit in the hall of heaven;<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Proclamations, etc. In *Pamphlets issued by the Insurgents at Nanking*, no. 33. Translated by W. H. Medhurst.

<sup>21</sup> Probably referring, as the next verse certainly does, to the occupation of Nanking.

13. To make the heavenly city our capital; to found the heavenly kingdom,
14. [That] the ministers and people of all nations might do homage to their Father Emperor.<sup>22</sup>

The Trimetrical Classic also gives us a hint regarding these descents:<sup>23</sup>

In the Mow-shin year [1848]  
 The son was troubled and distressed,  
 When the great God  
 Appeared on his behalf.  
 Bringing Jesus with him,  
 They both came down into the world;  
 Where he instructed his Son  
 To endure forever,  
 To defeat corrupt machinations,  
 And to display majesty and authority.

Another extract regarding the same year, which also appears in the proclamation sent to the British in 1858 may refer to one of these descents, though it gives the appearance of being a special manifestation of power.

35. In the year "Wu-shin" [1848], when the King of the South was besieged in Kwei-ping,
36. We besought the Father to come down and manifest his terms.
37. We had returned from Kwangsi to Kwang-tung.
38. The Heavenly Father did come down to the world and rescued [the king of] the south.<sup>22</sup>

Hung Jin's account of what was happening during this year, while Fêng Yun-shan was absent in Kwangtung, pictures among the God-worshippers a great amount of disorder and dissension. From his description it would

<sup>22</sup> Proclamation, Dec., 1858, sent to H. M. S. *Retribution at Wuhu*. Reprinted from the Blue Book of 1858 by Lindesay Brine, *The Taiping Rebellion*, pp. 229 f.

<sup>23</sup> Pamphlets issued by the Insurgents at Nanking, Medhurst, p. 8.



appear that there were phenomena similar to those recorded in the account of the early Christian church, when many men and women spoke as if they were inspired by the Holy Ghost. Many possessions of this kind were recorded among these Kwangsi congregations, trances in which messages—sometimes unintelligible, but generally in doggerel verse—were delivered through those who had received the possessions. Hung, on his arrival, inspected the records of the various alleged utterances and judged some to be divine and others of demon origin—those of Yang and Hsiao falling into the first group and representing actual messages of the heavenly Father and the celestial elder brother, Jesus.<sup>24</sup> He does not give us any clew as to who were apparently trying to gain the leadership, but whoever they were, the acceptance of Yang and Hsiao as the mouthpieces for God the Father and Jesus the Savior quieted the opposition, and gave the control of the movement into the hands of these men. But they were not able to go forward without the presence of a head, and that must be Hung, the original source of the movement, on the strength of whose story most of the propaganda had probably been carried on.

One matter is fairly clear from these accounts; that some struggle for leadership had been going on among these congregations, serious enough to involve the whole future of Hung himself; and that temporarily this struggle had been brought to an end. Another point is also clear. Though the actual organisation of the Taiping government did not take place until nearly three years later, the delivery of Fêng from Kweip'ing, possibly from prison, was so important a matter as to verge on the miraculous. The probable explanation, in the light of the passages implying several pitched battles, is that the rescue was effected by force against the officials and their

<sup>24</sup> Hamberg, pp. 45 f.

soldiers. Hence we may consider this event the real opening of the Taiping rebellion.

Hung Jin represents the movement as one thrust by a hostile government on the God-worshippers about the middle of 1850, though he does admit that as early as 1845 or 1846 Hung had expressed to a relative his secret purpose of overthrowing the Manchus.<sup>25</sup> Apparently forgetting that admission he later insisted that the genesis of the revolutionary movement was in 1850, after fighting had been going on for two years, and was due to the sudden adherence of a horde of defeated Hakkas who joined these congregations in order to secure refuge from their neighbors with whom they had been forced to quarrel.<sup>26</sup> But we have already examined several passages which prove that 1848 was the year when fighting began, and are prepared to understand that in 1850 these congregations, still separated among the different leaders, had much training in military tactics.

In the sixth month, 1850 (July 8-August 7), the detached companies first came together at Kint'ien, a small town in the district of Kweip'ing, having been aroused, apparently, by some quarrel between the Pênti and Hakka groups in which the officials gave aid to the former.<sup>27</sup> From the villages round about, the angry bands poured into Kint'ien, where Yang Siu-ch'ing was ready to receive them. Hung Siu-ch'üan and Fêng Yun-shan were at that time held as prisoners at Hwachow in P'ingnanhsien, some forty miles away, and had to be rescued by the united band under Yang, in the eighth moon. Having rescued these leaders, they went on to the Wuhsuan district, where the most formidable of their followers joined the movement; among them Lin Hung-ch'iang, later placed at the head of the expeditionary force that

<sup>25</sup> Hamberg, pp. 29 f.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 48 ff.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 50-52.

marched from Nanking to the north, the pirate, Lo Takang, a member of the Triad Society, and Hung Tach'üan, later the T'ienteh-wang, Hung's co-sovereign. Little by little, arms and various other warlike necessities were obtained and the government and army organisations began to take shape. With their numbers thus increased, they returned to Kint'ien.

While these serious steps were being taken by the rebels, the government awoke to the fact that something more serious than bandit raids was astir, and that extraordinary measures were necessary. As early as August General Hsiang Yung was ordered from Hunan to Kwangsi as *t'ituh* and reached there in October. Lin Tse-hsü, notorious among foreigners as having helped to bring about the Opium War, so-called, was brought from his retirement and dispatched as an imperial commissioner, but died on the way, and Li Sing-yuan was appointed to that post. Chow T'ien-chieh became acting governor of the province. A skirmish was fought on January 1, 1851, but the imperialists failed.<sup>28</sup> At the Chinese New Year, February 1, the insurgents inaugurated their new government, calling it T'aiping T'ienkuo, or the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace, with T'ienteh and Hung as co-sovereigns.<sup>29</sup>

In the next few months both sides gained strength. Taiping raids from Kint'ien and later from their bases at Tahwang Kiang and Siangchow brought in reinforcements and supplies and their numbers increased rapidly. The imperialists were reinforced by the mandate for Wulant'ai of the Banner forces to proceed to Kwangsi, and by the appointment in April of Saishanga as im-

<sup>28</sup> Tsêng, then at Peking, wrote home in May, 1851, saying that the leaders in Kwangsi were at daggers' points.

<sup>29</sup> On the authority of the Kanwang's confession, p. 5. The formal date we shall see is a year later while they were at Yungan.

perial commissioner with full powers. The latter carried with him two million *taels* of silver. Troops from the capital were sent through Hunan under Generals Pa-chingteh and Tahunga; and the governor was ordered to hand over civil affairs in Kwangsi to the treasurer and to bend all his energies to suppress the insurgents in his province.

During the spring and summer many battles took place between detachments of imperial and Taiping forces, but none of them were conclusive. The new imperial commissioner, Saishanga, on his arrival July 3, decided that the greatest chance for success lay in the recruiting of 'braves' rather than in trusting to the regulars. In consequence, about thirty thousand of these were recruited and distributed through the disaffected regions.<sup>80</sup>

We are unfortunately left without means of determining just how many were now engaged on each side. Despite the poor quality of the imperial soldiery there must have been a very considerable force of them available for the attack on Siangchow which took place on July 25, when seven successive battles caused the rebels so much distress that they were forced to escape to Hsinch'u, having lost two or three thousand men.

In their new headquarters the rebels arranged themselves in strategic positions among the hills, with Hsinch'u in front and two mountains as outposts on each flank. The imperialists made careful preparations for the attack. Tahunga was placed to the southeast; Wulant'ai and Tsou Ting-san to the northwest; Lieutenant Generals Li Hung-ch'ing and Ching Wen-tai were east and southeast, leaving Generals Pach'ingteh and Hsiang Yung to take the road over the Purple Thorn hills. The plan for some reason failed, though the different gen-

<sup>80</sup> The material for these paragraphs is from the *P'ing-t'ing Yueh-fei Ch'u-lueh*, I, 8 ff. Cf. *Taiping T'ien Kuo Yeh-shi*, I, 2 f.

erals followed their instructions and made their attack in unison. They managed to secure the two mountain outposts, however, thus making it necessary for the rebels to retreat to the tea districts beyond.

General Hsiang wished to press his advantage and move quickly against the Taipings before they could consolidate their positions, but Pach'ingteh demurred, thus causing a fatal delay of five days, during which the rebels prepared themselves. Other delays followed, preventing the attack from being again made until August 28, when, at Hungmen, the well-fortified insurgents actually repulsed the whole imperial army. Later on, when the attack was renewed Wulant'ai's forces lost their way among the hills and Hsiang Yung was impeded by rains, thus enabling the rebel army to extricate itself from the impending danger and escape to Yungan, which they captured on the twenty-fifth of September, advancing against it by land and river.<sup>31</sup> They now numbered about 37,000 people, with an effective army of about 5,000 men.<sup>32</sup>

The Taiping cause had almost perished in the tea district when the imperial army surrounded it. There was danger both from within and without, and at least three descents of God and Jesus were necessary on the day of particular danger, August 17, to bring them back to their duty. This fact argues that they were far nearer defeat at that time than they have admitted anywhere else. The disaffection seems to have been directed chiefly against the leader Hung Siu-ch'üan and his able general,

<sup>31</sup> The *Peking Gazette*, published separately, give the date as Aug. 27 (first of the eighth moon). Both *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh* (p. 106) and *Yueh Fen Chi Ssu* give the date as the intercalary eighth moon. The former says it was taken on the first (Sept. 25), while the latter places the capture on the second (Sept. 26). Since the fighting was taking place at the time given in the *Gazettes* for the capture of the place I assume an error there, and accept the first of the intercalary moon.

<sup>32</sup> *Taiping T'ien Kuo Yeh-shi*, III, 53 f.

the mouthpiece of God the Father. Whether they were simply terrified at the gradual closing in of the imperial army or were urged to mutiny by men who desired to gain the leadership does not appear from the records.

The great deliverance that came inspired confidence throughout the entire army. No longer did they disobey their leaders or fear the imperialists. In the city of Yungan, while the imperialists slowly gathered their forces for the siege, the Taipings organised their kingdom. The provisional government instituted at Kint'ien gave place to the more permanent organisation; the new dynasty was proclaimed in Yungan, five kings besides the original two were created and appointed to their high duties. Ministers of state were likewise commissioned; army regulations were promulgated, and officers appointed, while some of the more essential portions of civil government were arranged. A new solar calendar was also adopted, dividing the year of 366 days into twelve months of thirty and thirty-one days each and abolishing leap years.

The discomfited imperialists gradually moved up to Yungan, which they proceeded to surround and besiege. Again the rebellion was in their hands. As early as November 4 the imperial commissioner, Saishanga, moved to Yangsoh, a commanding base near Yungan, and before the end of the year had completely encircled the town. Wulant'ai was to the south, Liu Chang-ch'ing, and later Hsiang Yung himself, was to the north, while sufficient forces occupied the hills east and west.

On the seventh of February, 1852, everything being in readiness, Saishanga (now degraded to the rank of *t'ifuh*) moved from Yangsoh to Yungan to direct the siege in person. The rebels in the beleaguered town were short of gunpowder and probably of food as well. Sorties were attempted on February 17 and 19. The imperialists

in turn tried to take the town by storm. Their concerted attack lasted for three days and nights and might have brought the rebellion to an end but for the death of some of the officers and the relaxation of effort on the part of some of those who remained. The rebels were forced back behind their walls. Again about the last of February the latter, issuing from the city, tried in vain to break the lines of the enemy.

This deadlock continued until the sixth of April, when there was another attack by the rebels against the weakest part of the imperial lines, which yielded before the terrific impact and on the seventh opened the way for the entire Taiping host to break through and escape. Wulant'ai appears to have made a desperate attack on them as they were going through the mountains and inflicted more than two thousand casualties, capturing Hung Ta-ch'üan, the T'ienteh-wang, one of the co-sovereigns. Heavy rains and a general paralysis of the imperial army conspired to prevent the adoption of any effective measures until the rebels were safely over the hills and far away. Only Wulant'ai kept up a fight with their rear until not far from Kweilin he was fatally wounded and his troops were disheartened.

This disaster was the turning point in the war for both sides. The rebels lost Hung Ta-ch'üan, one of their chief military leaders. But their escape so clearly pointed to divine interposition that the religious side of their cause was greatly strengthened; they believed themselves invincible. More and more their enterprise became characterised by fanaticism, less and less by level-headed and far-seeing statesmanship. Indeed, there is reason to suspect that Hung Ta-ch'üan was deliberately abandoned to the imperialists, for only Wei Ch'ang-hui attempted his rescue. The others could not or would not go to his aid. The cause was destined to prosper for

many months through the momentum of its great successes, which added thousands of followers; but, with a lack of suitable leadership, it was doomed to eventual failure when its religious vagaries took the place of wise statesmanship.

On the other hand, imperialist failures at Hsinch'u and the tea districts in 1851 and at Yungan in 1852, when all the cards were in their hands, doomed them to a long-drawn-out duel, destined to last for more than twelve years. We cannot too strongly emphasise what a great revelation of weakness this was. Accurate numbers are lacking in our sources of information. The imperialists are said to have had "several tens of *ying*,"<sup>33</sup> and we may infer, from the fact that the rebels did not fill out their first army until they had reached Hunan, that they scarcely had more than twelve thousand fighting men. Saishanga may have had four or five times that number in all his commands. He was now cashiered and Hsiang Yung appointed in his place.

Avoiding the well-defended cities, the rebels marched over byways to Kweilin. Their families were with them on the *trek*; many had literally burned their bridges behind them by setting fire to their homes. The force consisted both of Chinese and Miao tribesmen.<sup>34</sup> Hsiang Yung, realising the danger that threatened Kweilin, hastened thither with all speed to aid the governor in the defence of his capital, and entered the city barely one hour before the siege commenced. Every device known to them was used to force an entrance to the city—high scaling ladders and towers on wheels among other things, but they all failed. The siege lasted thirty-one days be-

<sup>33</sup> The *Siang Chun Chi*, I, 8b says there were "several tens of *ying*." If a *ying* contained 500 men, as was the case later, this would indicate several times five thousand men.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 9a.



fore the rebels gave up and set out for Hunan and the Yangtse River cities beyond. They were no longer a handful of *t'uwei* or banditti, but a nation on a pilgrimage to their distant home.

During the siege at Kweilin, when the imperialists had sent out hurried and frenzied calls for help, Kiang Chung-yuan came with a private following of 1,200 men whom he had raised in Hunan, also Liu Chang-yu with a similar army with which he had put down the bandit, Li Yuan-hwa. These two men were so successful in their skirmishes with the rebels east of the city that the reputation which the Hunan 'territorials' were to win during this titanic struggle was already beginning to be deserved.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SUPPRESSED LEADER

THUS far we have gone on the assumption that the Taping records were to be trusted and that the party of Hung Siu-ch'üan was the only one concerned in the uprising. Our account of the beginnings may be summarised somewhat as follows. For a year or two prior to 1848 the God-worshippers had been following the fashion set by their neighbors in organising and drilling military companies with the apparent purpose of helping to deal with wandering bandits. Through competition of the various units and careful training they had reached a high order of fighting power. Their enthusiasm was very great. In the critical year 1848 they had passed through an inner crisis, when the two men, Yang and Hsiao, by divine interposition seized the power and spoke thenceforth for God the Father and Jesus the Saviour. Resistance to the government had already begun. It is probable that some of the disaffected elements of society were joining the new movement with revolutionary aims, though on that point we must speak with reserve. The time was ripe for a leader, and the control of the situation by Yang and Hsiao pointed out the leader, Hung Siu-ch'üan, whose trances of 1837 furnished the background for the similar experiences and claims of the others. Fêng Yun-shan went to Kwangtung to bring Hung out of his retirement in Hwabsien and sent him forth as the head of the new

movement. Thus far there seems little to throw doubt on the story as given.

Difficulties, however, appear at this point. One of these is the place of Fêng in the new state. That he founded the God-worshippers is clear from all accounts; but now, when they were coming together, he had a distinctly secondary rôle to play. How did Yang and Hsiao secure the divine oracle that placed them ahead of Fêng? A second difficulty arises in the fact that even after Hung had come to take the position of head, his leadership, though strenuously supported by Yang, is most grudgingly accepted. The recorded descents of God and the celestial elder brother in 1851 and 1852<sup>1</sup> make clear the surprising fact that there is disloyalty to the T'ienwang even after the villagers have abandoned their homes to follow him. Time and again they were called on to return to their duty as his followers. A few of these descents may have been necessitated by danger of defeat at the hands of imperialists, but some are inexplicable on that ground. Was it possible that a rival group existed in the camp who used the common fear to secure disaffection in the ranks as a means of gaining the leadership? If we confine ourselves to the sources we have thus far examined, the natural explanation for these crises would be that the followers were so reluctant to leave their homes and native hills that encouragement through divine revelation was necessary; or we might consider that the growing number of adherents would make it necessary to have new assurances from heaven that this was an inspired enterprise. But the excellence of the small army, the apparent lack of connection between some of these descents and threatened danger from without, and above all, their frequency—nine or ten having occurred—

<sup>1</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, supplementary vol. II, 1b.

lead one to suspect that they had more to do with serious opposition to the ruling *clique* than with outside events.

If Taiping sources do not throw any more light on these difficulties we may examine other sources. The chief imperialist accounts of the rebellion trace the rise of the movement to a revolutionary brotherhood started at Kout'ushan by a certain Chu Kiu-t'ao. Into this brotherhood Hung and Fêng both entered later. But afterwards they realised that their magical arts were insufficient and thereupon all went to Kwangsi, where they founded the order of God-worshippers, in the Kweip'ing district.

In 1853 Dr. Medhurst published the following note among some rebel proclamations received from the interior: "It is also reported that one revolutionary chief, called Choo-kew-taou, is superior to Hung-sew-tsuen; and it is said that at Kow-t'hou-san, when he arrived in Hoo-nan, all the revolutionary chiefs came out to receive him on their knees. They also slaughtered oxen and pigs and had a feast for three days on the occasion. This was only once reported, and not afterwards mentioned."<sup>2</sup> As it stands there are some inaccuracies, because Kout'ushan was in Kwangtung, not in Hunan; therefore, if the incident occurred it must have been before the Taipings emerged from Kwangsi. Nevertheless, the scrap of evidence is of great value as showing that some other chief was equal to Hung, if not actually superior, that he was a revolutionary from the very beginning, before the societies were formed, and that he had tried to organise brotherhoods himself but with indifferent success because his superstition was not good enough. If, as we are told, this individual happened upon Hung and Fêng and found the former in possession of a belief that he had been carried to heaven to receive commission

<sup>2</sup> "Proclamations of the Insurgent Chiefs," in a bound volume of the *Peking Gazette*, 1853-1856, p. 7.

as the second son of God, we may be sure that he was overjoyed to make use of that revelation for his own ends.

The otherwise inexplicable tour of Hung and Fêng into Kwangsi becomes clear. This astute Choo or Chu, seeing the value of the new gospel as a means to enrol followers for a revolutionary movement—his own inventions having far less appeal to a superstitious mind—decided to take these two men into the region where this kind of appeal would have the most force. This led him into the borders of the Miao regions in Kwangsi, where the Hakkas were also to be found.

By this time it must have become clear that Hung was an impractical visionary and that Fêng was the more gifted and energetic of the two. Either with the knowledge and consent of Hung, or, as seems more probable, without that knowledge, Chu and Fêng came to an understanding and turned aside when they were supposed to be on the way to Kwangtung, and began the work of preaching the new faith with great success.<sup>3</sup> Even though this was done without the consent of Hung, it was at least a propaganda in his name and with his visions as a substantial part of the message. Hung meanwhile followed his natural bent in intellectual and literary pur-

<sup>3</sup> The Chungwang summarises the teachings in these words: "Once the T'ienwang suddenly fell ill [this was in the year Ting-yu, 1837]. He was in a trance for seven days. When his soul returned he spoke celestial words exhorting the people of the world to revere God and follow goodness. Those people of the world who were willing to worship God would be free from calamities and misfortunes, but those who were unwilling to do so would be injured by snakes and tigers. Those who honoured God could not worship other spirits; those who worshipped other divinities committed sin. Wherefore people of the world, having once worshipped God, could never more worship other divinities. As to the common folk they all fear death, and hearing that snakes and tigers would bite them, who would not fear? So they followed him."

suits at home or at Canton, either as a part of the plan or because it was not yet time to admit him to the secret.

The crises of 1848, however, raised the latent question of leadership. If the movement had the visions of Hung as its basis of appeal to enter the brotherhoods, his eventual presence would be indispensable to the new nation, at least during its struggle for power, and he would have to have a position of high honor. On the other hand, if this Chu were the real organiser of the rebellion, he would expect to sit on the throne at last. This struggle for leadership appears to be the natural explanation of the momentous descents in 1848. Hung himself considered them the source of his call to government.<sup>4</sup> There was an issue: Who should rule in the new state, Hung the prophet or Chu the statesman? In the struggle we should expect to find Fêng and Chu working together to hold the leadership and Yang and Hsiao emphasising the religious rather than the political elements. Their visions apparently gave them so great an advantage that the others had to retire somewhat and bide their time, especially when their visions or those of men favorable to them were rejected by Hung on his arrival. Chu was compelled to compromise.

This, however, begins to seem fanciful. Where is this man Chu? Never does he appear again either in imperial or Taiping literature. But another name meets us in imperial sources, and very recently in a book purporting to come from a rebel writer.<sup>5</sup> Every Chinese account speaks of six instead of five minor *wangs* in the Taiping state as it was first constituted. The additional one is called T'ienteh-wang. But, even more significant, in the earlier days of the rebellion almost all the proclamations which

<sup>4</sup> See last chapter.

<sup>5</sup> *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi* (Unofficial History of the Celestial Kingdom of Taiping, Shanghai, 1893).

were translated and published by foreigners place the title T'ienteh in the position usually occupied by the emperor's name in imperial mandates. Until the rebels reached Nanking it was generally understood that they had proclaimed their ruler under that title. When they had taken Nanking and foreigners first came into contact with them there, all traces of the title disappeared, the monarch being known as 'T'ienwang,' while the title T'ienteh was disclaimed entirely.<sup>6</sup> Several theories are advanced to account for this strange occurrence, among which the choice will depend on one's attitude towards the genuineness of a document known as the "Confession of Hung Ta-ch'üan," who was captured by the imperialists at Yungan, and claimed to be T'ienteh.<sup>7</sup>

This confession, if the writer actually be what he pretends, will clear up the difficulty and enable us to gain a

<sup>6</sup> "Trip of H. B. M. Plenipotentiary, Sir George Bonham, Bart., etc., in the *Hermes* to Nanking, April 22, 1853." Reprinted from the *North China Herald* of May 7, 1853.

<sup>7</sup> T. T. Meadows, *China and her rebellions*, pp. 240, 241 note, rejects the whole tradition of T'ienteh, believing that there never was such a person, and that the confession of Hung Ta-ch'üan is a fabrication by a rebel who desired a little cheap glory, since he was doomed to death in any case. He sees no evidence of suppression in the insurgent books. If there is any basis for the mistake he inclines to the view that Hamberg's theory is the best.

Hamberg's theory is that Hung Siu-ch'üan himself is T'ienteh, but that the title is a misunderstanding of the last two characters, T'ienkuo, in the name of the new empire, "Taiping T'ienkuo," which stood where the imperial designation usually stood. This being wrongly understood among mandarin-speaking Chinese soldiers from the north would naturally become changed to T'ienteh, a more suitable imperial designation. He implies that this was the explanation received from his informant, presumably Hung Jin.

As against this is the fact that several proclamations of the rebels are translated by Medhurst, and the character of the original is given. There is no confusion possible in the written characters, which are very different. Here no vocal misunderstanding is possible.

Brine, pp. 136-138, accepts Hung Ta-ch'üan's confession as true, but is at a loss to understand his place in the movement.

fairly complete view of the Taiping beginnings. It will be remembered that on April 7, 1852, the Taipings, who had long been besieged in Yungan by the whole imperial army, made good their escape, and began their march which led them finally to Nanking. One small group, under suspicious circumstances, was cut off and the leader captured. This leader was so evidently a chief of high rank that he was sent to Peking carefully guarded. He never disclosed his true name, but called himself Hung Ta-ch'üan<sup>a</sup> and claimed to be of equal rank with Hung, the Taiping-wang. His confession is important enough to be quoted in full.<sup>b</sup>

Hung-Tai-tsuen confesses as follows:—I am a man of the district of Hung-shán, in the prefecture of Hung-chau; I am thirty years of age. My parents are both dead, and I have neither brothers, wife, nor children. I have been from youth devoted to letters, and have several times entered the examinations; but as the officers did not acknowledge my talent for writing and repressed my abilities, I became a priest. I had not long left the priesthood when I again entered the examination, and as before I was unsuccessful. This greatly irritated me, and I began to study books on the military art very carefully, in order to scheme against the empire; I also made myself perfectly familiar with the topography of every part of the land. While I was a priest, I kept myself quiet and retired, diligently examining all works on strategy, so that all the rules of discipline and war since the days of antiquity were familiar to me; and I was emulous to equal Kung-Ming [in the days of the Three States]. Thus I came to think that I could carry out my plans speedily and if I followed the plans of Kung-Ming, flattered myself that I could take the empire as easily as turn my hand over.

<sup>a</sup> The name Ta-ch'üan is so similar to Siu-ch'üan as to convey the impression that they were brothers. But the character "ta," meaning "great" would probably be taken to show that this man was the elder.

<sup>b</sup> Copied from Brine, pp. 132 ff., who secured it from *Overland China Mail*, Aug. 23, 1852.



Several years ago, when I was a priest, I was travelling over Kwang-tung, and when in the district of Hwa, became acquainted with Hung-Siú-tsuen (who is not my relative) and Fung-yun-shán, both of whom are literary persons of great talents, and the former, like me, had been unsuccessful in the examinations. He had formerly been through both the Kwáng provinces, and formed an association of reckless persons of the Triad Society. Every one of those who joined it in Kwang-tung adhered to Fung; and this was done several years, he deluding every one who joined the association to take their oaths that they would live and die with him, and exert all their efforts to assist him. They gradually increased in numbers, and it was feared that there might be a want of hearty union in some of the members; so Hung-Siú-tsuen learned magical arts and to talk with demons, and with Fung-yun-shán made up a story about a "Heavenly Father, Heavenly Brother and Jesus; narrating how the Heavenly Brother came down from heaven, and that all who would serve the Heavenly Father would then know where their best interests and profit lay; that when he sat, it was in a small hall of heaven; and when he had been put to death by men, he sat in a great hall of heaven." With these inflaming words they beguiled the members of the association, so that none of them left it; and this procedure, I was well aware, had been going on for several years.

In December, 1850, when their numbers and strength had become large, I went to Kwang-si, where I saw Hung-Siú-tsuen; he had then engaged the graduate Wei-ching, alias Wei-Chang-kwui, of Pingnan, and Siú, Yáng, and others of Kwang-tung, to go out and begin to plunder and fight the government. The members of the brotherhood willingly followed these men, giving themselves, their families and property and all to them, so that they had funds for their purposes and bought horses and engaged troops. Their hopes were now high, and they took at this time the name of the Shang-ti Association.

When I reached Kwang-si, Hung-Siú-tsuen called me his worthy brother, and honored me with the title of King Tien-teh [Celestial Virtue], and took all his lessons in the art of war from me. He called himself King Taeping [Great Peace]. Yáng

was generalissimo of the troops with civil powers, and had the title of Eastern King; Siú was deputy-generalissimo of the right, with the title of Western King; Fung-yun-shán was general of the reserve, with the title of Northern King. Ministers also were made; thus Shih was appointed minister over the Board of Civil Office, and King of the Right Wing; Tsin was over the Board of Revenue, and King of the Left Wing; Wu-lai and Tsang were Generals of the Guard, Chu was Judge-Advocate, and Tsung-yuh-siu was Lieutenant-General. There were many military officers, whose names I do not remember, some of them over three hundred men, and others over one hundred men.

In action whoever backed out was executed, and their officers severely punished; while rewards and promotion were given to those who were victorious. The government troops killed many of our men. I called Hung-Siú-tsuen my elder brother, and those under our lead addressed us both as "Your Majesty"; we addressed them by their names.

On the 27th August, 1851, we took Yung-ngan, Wei-ching having before given battle to and defeated the imperial troops.

I and Hung entered the city in our sedans on the 2nd of September, and occupied the official residence which we called our court, and where we permitted none to dwell. This Hung-Siú-tsuen received most of his tactics from me; but my opinion did not accord with his, and I often spoke of this being a small spot, and asked where was the propriety of so many persons styled kings? Moreover he had relied upon his magical arts for assistance; but no one, even in ancient times, ever reached the throne by them: added to this he was both a winebibber and a licentious man, having thirty-six women with him. I wished to hear of his destruction and defeat, for then I could succeed in obtaining dominion.

At this time the Eastern king Yáng managed the forces, sending them out and appointing their duties, and the officers who should be over them. Wei-ching had the superintendence of actual engagement with the troops, in which he was both skilful and unwearied: he was a most courageous man; even ten thousand of the imperialists were not a match for him with a thousand men under him. During the several months we oc-

cupied Yung-ngan-chau, which we called our court, all our officers memorialized us respecting the affairs of state. A calendar was issued under the direction of Yáng in which no intercalary month was inserted; but in this matter I was not a party.

Now when it happened that the ingress into the city was stopped, and rice, gunpowder, and other ammunition were beginning to fail, we reflected that the members of our association in Kwáng-tung and in the department of Wu-chau were formerly very numerous, and plucked up heart to make the attempt to get out of our hole.

On the 7th of April we rallied our spirits and attempted the sortie, dividing the forces into three bands. About 8 p.m. Wei-ching sallied out with six thousand men under him, followed by Yáng and Fung-Yun-shan with five or six thousand men, about 10 p.m., to cut their way through; these took Hung-Siú-tsuen and his women with them, thirty or more persons, with horses, sedans and all. About 2 a.m., having more than a thousand men with us, I and Siú went out, being distant from Hung-Siú-tsuen about a league, and were attacked by Government troops, and pursued. Siú would not attend to my orders or signals, and our force was routed, more than a thousand men losing their lives, and I was taken prisoner. It was our intention to have gone by way of a place called Kú-chuh to Chau-ping-hien (in the department of Ping-lo), and then to Wú-chau-fú, and thus get into Kwáng-tung.

The firing of the east fort when we sallied out was my act, and I also directed putting fire in the city, so as to facilitate our sortie.

My original surname is not Hung; but it is only since I contracted a brotherhood relation with Hung-Siú-tsuen, that I changed it to Hung Tai-tsuen. I wore embroidered clothes and a yellow cap; the four kings had red-bordered caps like it; the rest of the high officers wore yellow embroidered aprons when they went into action, and carried yellow flags. In the Yamun I wore a yellow robe; and I did not of my own will desire to sit on the King's throne.

This confession is true.

For the substantial truth of this confession there are a number of good arguments.

1. The imperial authorities were convinced that Hung was a real chief of high authority. This is indicated by the fact that they forwarded him to Peking carefully guarded. They may have thought him superior to Hung Siu-ch'üan, or not, but they were not duped into thinking that he was the only leader or that they had crushed the rebellion in his capture. If they had later discovered that he was actually an officer of lower rank masquerading as one of the chiefs, they would certainly have omitted all reference to his name in the accounts of the rebellion which were written when they had gained more accurate information.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, not long after this, Saishanga was cashiered for incompetence, and it would have been possible for them to make this mistake one of the counts in the indictment if they thought that there had been deception or a mistake.

2. His claim to being a Hunanese was tested on the way down the Siang River. On reaching Changsha they called him up and said that they were arriving at Hengchow, but he recognised the place at once as Changsha.<sup>11</sup>

3. His claim to equality with the Taiping-wang is also strengthened by the universal understanding that there was a man with the title of T'ienteh in the movement from the first. If the title T'ienteh had been borne by Hung himself he would have had no reason later to change it; or if he did change it, no reason for concealment.

4. The title he bore is one that distinguishes him clearly from the five other kings created below the T'ien-

<sup>10</sup> A comparison of some of the erroneous information in contemporary *Peking Gazette*s with the later accounts in the official histories shows that other errors were corrected. This was never changed or dropped out.

<sup>11</sup> They took him down the river very rapidly and under heavy escort for fear he would be rescued by some of his party in Hunan.

wang. It is also a title which would be suitable for an emperor. The use of the character for "celestial" places him at least on an equality with the T'ienwang and possibly ahead. The same is true of the name he assumed, Hung Ta-ch'üan, where the character *ta* might signify his seniority.

5. But the crowning proof of its authenticity, to my mind, lies in the remarkable understanding he has of the T'ienwang, who, to the followers of lower rank, must have appeared, through the glamour of imperial seclusion, a very able leader. Yet here is one who understood clearly what must have been known only to the inner circle of six, namely, that Hung was utterly incapable of heading a government, but was only able to dwell in his well-filled harem and indulge his religious vagaries, while his generals won victories and ordered the government in his name. Had the rank and file suspected such utter incapacity in their leader it is impossible to conceive of their going forward as willingly as they did. Though the intimate leaders knew of these limitations, they were ready to supply the deficiencies and support their prophet-king.

One must not ignore the fact that there are a number of inaccuracies and glaring mistakes in the confession. Why Hung should make Fêng King of the North instead of the South is a point that might argue ignorance. But most of the mistakes and errors give the appearance of falsifications, and some of the glaring contradictions in the narrative seem to arise from the same cause. He appears to be trying to escape the charge of being a party to the religious tenets of the movement, in order to preserve his reputation for intelligence among his countrymen. It seems clear that while he was not averse to using Hung's religion as a means of getting followers,

he expected to rely on fighting rather than magical arts to gain the throne.

The only question that remains is whether this man is the same one referred to as Chu Kiu-t'ao. No document thus far available makes any attempt to identify the two. But the confession expressly states that the name Hung is an assumed one. Again, one standing in such intimate relations with the T'ienwang as to associate freely with him, wear the insignia of royalty, receive a title indicating equality and even superiority, and discover the exact spot at which the Taiping movement will fail if the defects of Hung continue to guide its policy, must have been previously in a position to secure such honor from all. No other man stands in this place, as far as we know, but we do have the testimony that Chu was in exactly that situation. The identity of Hung Ta-ch'üan seems almost of necessity to be revealed as this Chu Kiu-t'ao.

If we admit this document as genuine it gives a vantage ground from which to reëxamine the movement and trace out its course of development. A comparative study of the various accounts of this new set of sources enables us to form a picture something as follows: a Hunanese named Chu, unsuccessful in the examinations in his province, secluded himself in a monastery somewhere and gave himself to the study of military tactics with a view to overthrowing the empire. At some date, probably about 1843 or 1844, he was in Kwangtung at a place named Kout'ushan and came in contact with Hung and Fêng. He was apparently himself organising fraternities, but the new 'superstition' of Hung's so appealed to him as a means of acquiring a following that he came to some understanding with Fêng to become a propagator of the new movement. The Chungwang's statement that Fêng originated the movement, interpreted in the light of this new source, leads to the view that the purpose of

propagating the new religion as a means to revolution was planned by these two men, and that Hung was not admitted to the secret until after the crises of 1848.

That the far-sighted Chu was relying on military prowess for the eventual success of the enterprise is too plainly stated to need any argument. He could not raise such a following as he needed, however, without some kind of religious mask, for the authorities were suspicious; therefore these societies of God-worshippers were exactly what he required. His task was apparently to drill them into skilled soldiers. We can understand how these leaders acquired military skill. Who can fail to see the mind of Chu rather than of Hung behind all this?

The confession of T'ienteh plainly tells us that he disagreed with Hung on his policies at Yungan and merely awaited a favorable opportunity to displace him. Such an opportunity might come sooner or it might be greatly deferred. But the evidence, as a whole, presents us with a picture of two antagonistic ideas lying behind this sudden outburst: one with anti-dynastic aims and political motives, a true nationalistic movement headed by T'ienteh; the other emphasising an iconoclastic, fanatical religion resting on supposed revelation and woven together from Confucian and Christian teachings into the peculiar faith of which the T'ienwang was the chief exponent. Early in the movement the two roads ran parallel. Eventually they were destined to diverge and lead in opposite directions, for T'ienteh must have foreseen and intended ultimately to avoid the national opposition which such a religion would arouse. When that day should come the struggle would naturally be aimed first at securing the allegiance of these God-worshippers, the pawns without which neither side could win.

While we cannot trace the course of the dissensions among the leaders during 1848, we may surmise that

there was a series of struggles going on whereby Yang and Hsiao were pitted against Chu and Wei Chang-hui, King of the North, possibly against Fêng as well. By some means Yang and Hsiao, in that group of religious fanatics, managed to persuade them that God and Jesus had actually descended and given them the leadership. We shall later find that Yang even tried to take away the power of Hung after they were safely settled in Nan-king, and that he and Wei became mortal enemies. Add to this the fact that Wei attempted the rescue of Hung Ta-ch'üan at the time of escape from Yungan, while Hsiao disobeyed him, and we have some fair grounds for assuming the division of kings in that way. Hung, when summoned to be the coördinate leader of the movement, rejected some of the revelations but accepted those of Yang and Hsiao, thus probably checking Chu, who had to bide his time.

The struggle of 1848 might thus be regarded as a preliminary struggle for the control of the movement in which the natural leaders were set aside by Yang and Hsiao, with the blessing later of Hung.<sup>12</sup> But T'ienteh was too powerful to be set aside, and as the unity of the rank and file had to be preserved a compromise was effected. Both men were admitted to the highest place, one as T'ienteh, whose title (and even the temporary dating of documents by that title) implied that he was the emperor. That would seem to place him above the T'ienwang, who, as religious head of the state, would be a sort of Taiping pope. But the actual control of the movement was in the hands of the Eastern and Western kings with their divine possessions. T'ienteh could do

<sup>12</sup> The *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, in listing the "kings," places the Eastern and Western kings in the first grade, those of North and South in the second grade, and the Assistant king and T'ienteh in the third grade.



nothing but await a chance to overthrow their influence. That chance was, however, deferred by the miraculous deliverances of the armies from some impossible situations, the final one being that very siege of Yungan from which they escaped, as they considered, only by the power of God. The capture of T'ienteh at that place deprived him of the opportunity he sought. The religious fanaticism of Hung and Yang—Hsiao having perished in the siege of Changsha shortly thereafter—delivered the movement over to a grotesque insistence on their superstition to the eventual undoing of the cause. Even Fêng, who had been associated with Chu in founding the societies and might have used his influence with Hung to guide the enterprise wisely, perished soon after they emerged from Kwangsi into Hunan.

If we are thus far correct we have the key for understanding the relation of the Triads to this movement. In Hamberg's account Hung Jin mentions the coming of Triad chiefs with their men into the camp, their instruction in the new religion, and their unceremonious departure because of the strict discipline prevailing there. On the face of it this is more of a pretext than a reason. The confession of T'ienteh, while he himself tries to shift the relationship with them to Fêng's shoulders instead of his own, does imply that much of the strength of the Taipings came from them. Certainty is made absolute by the proclamation addressed by Yang, king of the East, to his followers in 1852 when a considerable defection of Triads was taking place. "Moreover," he says, "you valiant men are many of you adherents of the Triad Society, and have entered into a bloody compact that you will exert your united strength and talents to exterminate the Tartar dynasty."<sup>13</sup> If there were large bodies of

<sup>13</sup> Proclamation published in the *North China Herald*, March 12, 1853. Reprinted among the Taiping books brought down by the *Hermes*. Subse-

Triads in the group, were they original members of the God-worshippers, or did they join as a body just before the fighting commenced, late in 1850, as Hung Jin asserts? And whether they came early or late, did they leave in the first flush of victory merely because of strict discipline in the army?<sup>14</sup> And one particularly wonders why they should embitter the Taipings and prove false to their oaths by deserting, as some did, to the imperialists, thus abandoning the cause of a native prince to which, as Yang rightly reminds them, they were bound by bloody oaths.

This again raises the question about the identity of this Chu, the lost leader. His surname Chu suggests at once a connection with the Ming Dynasty, which was founded by a priest named Chu Yuan-chang. There may have been no direct connection of T'ienteh with the Ming Dynasty, but the name suggests a possibility. His entry into the priesthood and study of military tactics also suggest the desire to restore the Ming Dynasty in the same manner in which it had arisen at first. Add to these possibilities the fact that there was a widespread rumor at the beginning of the Taiping uprising that a scion of the Mings remained in the background to be revealed at the proper time,<sup>15</sup> also the further fact that the term "Later Ming Dynasty," coupled in a very confusing way with references to the emperor "Taiping" and later to "Our Emperor T'ienteh," actually appeared in a docu-

quently the Taipings republished it, omitting references to the Triads. *Pamphlets Issued by the Chinese Insurgents at Nanking*, Medhurst, p. 33 note.

<sup>14</sup> Hamberg, p. 55. This makes the break come before the capture of Yungan, but that leaves too short a time for all the events to take place that are recorded. I believe, therefore, that it should be after the fall of the city.

<sup>15</sup> Brine, p. 136, who sees a coincidence, but does not have the material for identifying Hung Ta-ch'üan and Chu Kiu-t'ao.

ment which fell into foreign hands;<sup>16</sup> and we have a strong presumption that this T'ienteh was actually aiming to restore the Ming throne, but that in order to achieve this end the religious element in his following, that is, the God-worshippers, had to be appeased by concessions which gave Hung Siu-ch'üan a place of equality.

The Triads also had as their aim the restoration of the Mings, and their support would go to Chu rather than Hung. When the long-sighted Chu in 1848 failed to get or keep the control of the God-worshippers he could not fight against them, and he could not appeal to them to follow a Ming prince either, so he had to compromise. But as he still remained in the group of conspirators the Triads would hold themselves ready to join the God-worshippers when Chu gave the sign, which he probably did in 1850, when the great uprising was imminent.

As to their leaving at once, which Hung Jin suggests, I think the evidence in Yang's proclamation is a sufficient refutation. Nor is his quotation of Hung regarding the Triads to the point, when Hung claims that he does not aim at the restoration of the Mings, and asserts that he hates the Triads and what they stand for.<sup>17</sup> On the contrary, it tends to prove that the bond between Hung and this revolutionary society was so impossible that they would not submit to Hung at all except for the connection of Chu with the movement.

The moment, therefore, that Chu was captured and the delivery from Yungan threw the whole power into the hands of the fanatical party, these Triads also began to abandon the new leaders, only to meet with the re-

<sup>16</sup> Proclamation of Koh, supposedly a general of the rebels in Hupeh, April 3, 1852, probably a spurious document, but interesting as showing the dual character of the monarchy and corroborating the statement that there was an expectation that the Mings were coming back. "Proclamations of the Insurgent Chiefs."

<sup>17</sup> Hamberg, pp. 55 f.

proaches of Yang in the edict alluded to above. The desertions must have continued unchecked, very few of them being in the ranks when the city of Nanking was reached. One can explain so strange a defection only on some such hypothesis as that which is here advanced. It likewise helps us understand the eventual bitterness of the Taipings for the Triads. When Shanghai was in the possession of a branch of the latter and the Taipings might naturally have been expected to secure so rich a plum by an alliance, the bitterness was so deep that the two groups could not come to terms. Hung may have objected to them on religious grounds, as intimated by his cousin, but his canny followers would not have refused so powerful a help. But when they abandoned the Taiping group and went over to the enemy it was too much of a cleavage. In their success the Taipings carefully obliterated all traces of a Triad connection with the movement, and steadily refused to have any intercourse with them.<sup>18</sup>

Another question that remains to be answered is the exact date of setting up the reign of the T'ienwang. Three dates and places are mentioned by three different sources. Hung Jin, after he had become the Kanwang and was captured at the collapse of the movement, asserts that the first organisation was effected at Kint'ien, where the congregations had their first general rendezvous prior to taking Yungan. The "Confession" of Hung Tach'üan concurs to the extent of admitting that some form of government was in effect before the formal establishment of the Taiping T'ien-kuo at Yungan.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> A few of the former Triads appear to have remained with the Taipings, among them Lo Ta-kang, who was in command in Chinkiang in 1853, but he seems to have been an exception. See note on p. 33 of Medhurst, *Pamphlets*, etc. The fact that the records are tampered with in this one case may well lead us to suspect them all in this matter and in that of T'ienteh.

<sup>19</sup> Kanwang's *Sketch*, p. 5. Also *vide supra*, *Confession of Hung Ta-*

The dating according to the insurgent calendar, together with all the imperialist sources and Hung Jin's earlier account in Hamberg, agree that the formal establishment of the government, the ordering of the state, the adoption of the army regulations, and various other matters were accomplished during the occupation of Yungan from 1851 to the spring of 1852. These slight discrepancies need not concern us greatly, because the Chinese practice is to date a new reign from the beginning of the year following its actual opening.<sup>20</sup>

More serious is the statement of the Chungwang in his *Autobiography*, confirmed by all the imperialist sources, that at the end of November, 1852, just before the siege of Changsha was raised, Hung assumed his imperial seal. This might argue that Hung had not had a proper seal at Yungan and now rectified the omission, an absurdity to anyone who recalls the Chinese *flair* for seals, and the great care the Taipings showed to grade all their officers and indicate the grades not only by the flag, but by the size of their seals. That the T'ienwang should have been without one for nearly two years is unthinkable. A second explanation that he was heretofore only a *wang* or king, and now became an emperor fails because technically he never did become an emperor, through a religious objection to the use of the character "Ti," which meant God. Yet this ceremony did practically have that effect, because our sources assert that he was there hailed as a "*wan sui*" (ten thousand years), a term appropriate only to the emperor.

If he became an emperor at Changsha and yet concluded his reign at Yungan, see *Ch'üan; P'ing-ting Yuch-fei Chi-lueh*, supplementary vol. I, 1b; Hamberg, p. 57, which state that Hung was proclaimed emperor at Yungan. *Siang Chun Chi*, I, 8a.

<sup>20</sup> The Chinese revolution was accomplished late in 1911, and though they ceased to use the imperial designation of the year they did not begin the new dating till 1912.

tinued to retain his title of *wang*, what was the significance of the ceremony? Without dogmatising from the slender clues we have, does it not seem probable that whereas Hung had been one of two sovereigns, and that by now the fate of T'ienteh had become known to them, the ceremony at Changsha was the advancing of the Tai-ping-wang or T'ienwang to the position of sole monarch.<sup>21</sup> Certainly all the documents that reached the hands of foreigners in the early course of the rebellion are dated in the reign of T'ienteh. This would indicate that, despite what he says in his confession, he was considered the reigning monarch in the new movement as late as 1852.<sup>22</sup>

One interesting document which, from internal evidence, may be dated some time just before the final assaults on Changsha, is issued in the name of Hung, "Captain-general of the army, having entire superintendence of military affairs and aiding in the advancement of the T'haeping, or Great Pacifying Dynasty, in obedience to the will of Heaven," and is dated in the second year of T'ienteh.<sup>23</sup> There is some misinformation in the document, for it mentions the tranquillising of Changsha and the intention to depart for Kwangsi (which should perhaps be Kiangsu). Since the exact date is not mentioned, I venture to think that it was an advance proclamation prepared for posting on the walls of various down-river cities, and for this reason leaving the month and day to be filled in later. Its mention of the tranquillising of

<sup>21</sup> The earlier writers refer to Hung as T'aiping-wang (King of Peace), though later he was always styled T'ienwang. I am inclined to suspect that he changed the designation at Changsha, but cannot prove it. If there were proof it would establish the superiority of T'ienteh, as all the other evidence seems to do.

<sup>22</sup> A few such are recorded in Medhurst's translations in the *North China Herald*, reprinted in pamphlet form under title *Peking Gazette, 1853-1856*, an incomplete copy of which is in my possession.

<sup>23</sup> In the reprints referred to in the last note, p. 77.

Changsha, which did not happen, places it in the last few days before the siege was given up, that is, when mines were being prepared to blow up the city wall. These were sprung on November 10, 13, and 29. Its interest lies in the fact that until within a few days of this ceremony at Changsha the term "T'ienteh" was still used to designate the reign.

All these can be understood if the course of events followed the order suggested here, but become puzzling if Hung really was from the first the leader and prime mover in the rebellion. But this view has its difficulties also. Brine records in his book that within a few days after the Taiping hosts had taken Nanking a letter was handed to the Rev. Issachar J. Roberts, Hung's former instructor in Canton, inviting him to visit Nanking. This letter was said to be sealed with a seal about two inches square on which were cut the words "T'ienteh Taiping Hwang Yin" (Seal of the emperors T'ienteh and Taiping).<sup>24</sup> In the absence of the original seal one can but reserve judgment. If it is genuine and was actually sent from Nanking, the indications would point to the T'ienwang as having the double designation of T'ienteh and Taiping. But if that was true in 1853, just before the capture of Nanking, why should all knowledge of the term T'ienteh have been denied just a few weeks later?

We must also hold in mind that none of the later Taiping documents bear any allusion to a co-ruler with Hung. T'ienteh, if he existed, was obliterated in their records and remains only in imperialist works and earlier proclamations. This consideration led Meadows<sup>25</sup> to dismiss the confession of Hung Ta-ch'üan with a shrug, re-

<sup>24</sup> It is hard to comment on this without the text of the seal in Chinese. It may have been dispatched before the fall of Changsha. If later, it is inexplicable. Also the transliteration implies the character used for emperor rather than that for wang or king, which they generally used. Brine, p. 202.

<sup>25</sup> *The Chinese and their Rebellions*, pp. 240 f.

marking, "Teen tih is not even a myth; he is a pure mistake." He bases this on his conversations with T'ai-ping rebels and on the lack of traces of suppression in their books. If we have concluded rightly that the movement had lost its real leader and a large part of its Triad following, and if those who remained were followers of the fanatical group gathered about the T'ienwang, could we expect them to admit that there had been a lost leader? And as to suppression, mention has been made of a deliberate editing of one of Yang's speeches in order to omit reference to the presence of Triads among the following. Does this not raise the presumption that a similar suppression would occur in this connection? The recent informal work on the movement does include the T'ienteh-wang in the list, though placing him in the third grade.

On the whole, therefore, we have good reason to accept the truth of his activities, and the events fit into the hypothesis that he was the real chief. An ambitious man, perhaps actually a descendant of the Ming Dynasty, attempts to get a following. Providence grants him the means of securing this instrumentality, but it is dangerous. When the hour strikes to begin the great task the elements of danger come to the front and relegate this conspirator to a subordinate place or at least force him to share the power with the fanatics, and he had to be content to bide his time. Either by accident or treachery, Hsiao, the king of the West and mouthpiece of Jesus, failed him in the sortie from Yungan; he was captured, and thus the projector of the movement perished. The movement itself now comes into the hands of the less able religious fanatics, under whom the character of leadership deteriorates. Eventually the conservative forces of the empire rally and fall in line behind the Manchu rulers to suppress this strange state. Through the religious



vagaries of Hung it has lost whatever national appeal it had in the person of Chu.

Hung Ta-ch'üan's insight into the true capacity of Hung Siu-ch'üan was vindicated many times in the later days of the movement, but perhaps nowhere more strikingly than at Changsha and Nanking very shortly after. At Changsha the rebels were held in check for eighty-one days and their thousands at last failed to capture the city. Hung then decided to go over to Changteh in western Hunan and there establish his reign. Finding many boats at Yiyang, he was persuaded to go on down the river—pure accident!<sup>26</sup> When, after striking terror into the hearts of all and capturing city after city, the Taiping host rested at last in Nanking and the bolder ones urged that they press on into Honan with Peking in front, what do we see but a mere boatman frustrating that wise counsel by these words which lost them the empire that was fairly in their grasp: "The rivers are small in Honan and if besieged there you will be unable to obtain any rescue; now that you have got Kiangnan, the command of the Great River and a number of boats, what necessity is there for a move to Honan? Nanking should be the Imperial Home, and as the city is lofty, the moat deep and the people wealthy, why not establish your capital here, why think of going to Honan? . . . Honan, although somewhat central and sufficiently secure from danger, is really nothing equal to Kiangnan; let me request the Tungwang to consider the matter over."<sup>27</sup> This led to the decision to remain there instead of completing the conquest.

<sup>26</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 6.

<sup>27</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 6. P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh, supplementary vol. III, 12b, 13a, is inclined to place this incident among the marvels showing the protection of the gods for the Middle Kingdom. He is not sure whether this was an ordinary boatman, an imperial spy, or a spirit. The translator thinks it possible that Hunan instead of Honan was intended in this passage.

A man of Chu's character would undoubtedly have pressed on to Peking and completed the conquest while the chance offered, but Hung and Yang let the opportunity slip and lost the empire.

## CHAPTER IV

### FROM KWANGSI TO THE NORTH

AFTER a fruitless siege of thirty-one days, the rebels left Kweilin and set out for Hunan, pursued by seven thousand men under Ho Chun. They captured Hsingan (May 22), and Ch'üanchow (June 3). Kiang Chung-yuan, believing that the rebels would go from Ch'üanchow straight down the river to Changsha, hastened to Soh-yi Ferry, a point not far from Ch'üanchow, where the river was narrow and the banks well wooded. With trees instead of earthworks he determined to prevent the rebels from passing. As he anticipated, the Taipings descended the river in small boats; but when they reached this point they were compelled to measure their strength with Kiang and his small force of braves. For two days and nights the battle raged, a thousand of the rebels falling, among them Fêng Yun-shan. Their boats having all been burned by the brave imperial leader, the rebels were compelled to take up the overland march which led them to Yungchow and Taochow, which they captured on June 12.<sup>1</sup>

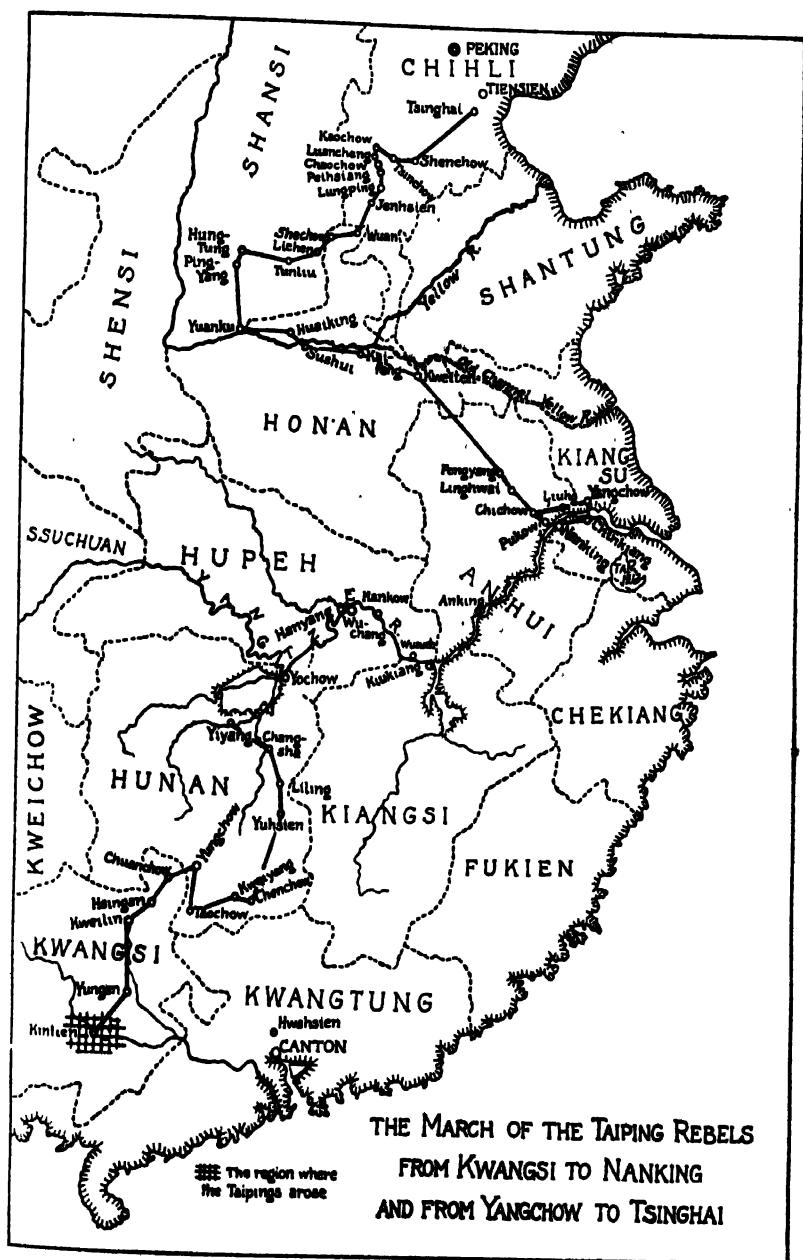
While they lingered at Taochow for more than a month, the rebels received thousand of adherents who brought new life into their enterprise.<sup>2</sup> But this acces-

<sup>1</sup> *Siang Chun Chi*, I, 9. *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh* states that Fêng was killed at Ch'üanchow, but it probably refers to the district rather than the city itself.

<sup>2</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, I, 15a.

sion of strength, which carried them successfully on to Nanking, was offset by the far-reaching effects of the battle of Soh-yi Ferry. The death of Fêng Yun-shan had removed the last of the abler and more level-headed leaders of the movement, who might have kept the real goal before Hung and his associates. His loss was scarcely less serious than that of Hung Ta-ch'üan. He had been associated with the latter in the founding of the societies, had probably shared his broader views, and moreover stood in the good graces of Hung. Wei Ch'ang-hui (the Northern king) and possibly Shi Ta-k'ai (the Assistant king) were of the same temperament, we may believe from subsequent happenings, but were not strong enough to cope with Yang and Hsiao for the control. Thus the deflection in the direction of religious fanaticism was made complete in the loss of Fêng; and this emphasis on a religion that was strange and distasteful to the nation at large in the end reacted on the movement and brought about its defeat.

The second great effect of the battle was to open the eyes of the government to a new and better way to overcome the rebellion. Twice the high officers with large armies had surrounded the small insurgent forces, only to let them escape again. In this battle a vastly inferior company of militia had stood its ground and turned aside the whole rebel army in the height of its victorious progress, thus giving time to prepare for the defence of Hunan's capital. It was the development of this type of army under Tsêng Kuo-fan which eventually brought success to the government. Only triumphant advance, or the appearance of capable leaders in place of T'ienteh and Fêng, could save the Taiping cause from inevitable disaster. The government was now in possession of the formula which would overcome their fatal weakness under the established system.





Meanwhile the imperialists gathered at Taochow and compelled the Taipings to remove to Ch'enchow, an important town on the highway between Canton and the north, which they took on August 16, Kweiyang having capitulated the day before.<sup>3</sup> The T'ienwang and most of the force remained there, while Hsiao Ch'ao-kwei, the Western king, pressed on with a small force, the "battalion of death," to capture Changsha which he believed to be unprepared and easily assaulted.<sup>4</sup>

Here eighty-one days were fruitlessly spent. The early death of Hsiao, the Western king, who was killed by a cannon shot fired from the city walls, made it necessary for Hung and Yang to hurry down with their entire force. It is a curious circumstance that the governor who defended the city at the end of the siege, Lo Ping-chang, was also a native of Hwabsien, which produced the T'ienwang. The imperialists gradually moved down the river, and again had the chance to crush the rebellion if they had only possessed soldiers who could fight like those of Kiang Chung-yuan. Three times during November (the tenth, thirteenth, and twenty-ninth) the rebels sprung mines, twice breaking down the city wall, only to be repulsed when they tried to enter through the breach.

Their supplies of salt and oil now being exhausted, with the enemy encamped all about, no alternative was left but to abandon the siege and move on. Before leaving, the T'ienwang "at the south gate inaugurated his government seal, and was styled 'wan-sui';<sup>5</sup> his wife was styled 'niang-niang.'" He appointed kings of the East,

<sup>3</sup> *Siang Chun Chi*, I, 10a; *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, I, 19b.

<sup>4</sup> It is said that the authorities were so poorly informed of their movements that only the rebels' mistaking the high tower on the southeast corner of the wall for one of the city gates saved Changsha from capture before the gates could be shut.

<sup>5</sup> "Ten thousand years," a term applied only to emperors.

<sup>6</sup> "Lady of Ladies," or "Imperial Consort."

West, South, and North and the Assistant king. Their appointment was earlier than his own assumption of imperial honors. When he had finished inaugurating his seal, he again attacked the city but failed to take it. He planned therefore to move his camp, intending to go through Yiyang, along the shore of the Tungting Lake to Changteh, being desirous of making Hunan his home.'"

A small force was dispatched towards the city of Siangtan with instructions to circle around the hills and join the main body, which, on the night of November 30, crossed the river on a pontoon bridge and marched westward to Yiyang. Their simple ruse had sent the imperialists scurrying along the east bank to Siangtan, thus permitting the rebels to escape without molestation. They had beleaguered Changsha since the tenth of September.

At Yiyang they found thousands of boats in the river in which they proceeded, past Lintzuk'ow and across the Tungting Lake, to Yochow. In this city had been stored the great magazine of munitions formerly in the possession of Wu San-kwei, leader of the San Fan rebellion under K'anghsi. Four days after their arrival, on December 13, they captured the city, from which most of the defenders had fled before their arrival.<sup>7</sup> Enriched by the capture of Wu San-Kwei's munitions and five thousand additional boats, they sailed down the Yangtse River to Hanyang, which fell on the nineteenth of December, 1852.<sup>8</sup> After burning the great commercial city of Hankow, they crossed the river to attack Wuchang. On the pretence of defending Hunan the viceroy was absent. The governor did the best he could, and the soldiers who, under Hsiang Yung, were arriving from Hunan, were

<sup>7</sup> From the Chinese of the *Chungwang's Autobiography*, preserved in the *Secret History of China*, p. 128. Compare Lay's translation, pp. 5, 6.

<sup>8</sup> *Siang Chun Chi*, I, 13; *P'ing-ting Yuch-fet Ch'ü-lueh*, I, 17b, 18a.



only a mile from the city walls with the rebels between them and the city. Neither the defenders nor the army of Hsiang seemed willing to come to blows with the rebels, and the winter rains afforded them excuses for inactivity. The Taipings were therefore left free to undermine the wall. The explosion took place at dawn on January 13. The governor fought bravely to hold the city, but, together with the other higher officials of the province, he was overpowered and fell.

Saishanga had been cashiered and replaced by Hsü Kwang-tsin; but the latter arrived at Changsha only after the rebels had left, and was at Yochow when they captured Wuchang. He was dismissed in disgrace and Hsiang Yung received appointment as imperial commissioner.

The fall of the great Wuhan cities, practically without a struggle, aroused the Peking government anew. Kishen (Ch'ishan), who, it may be recalled, succeeded Lin Tse-hsü as imperial commissioner during the crisis in Canton in 1840, was now brought out of retirement and ordered to the defence of Honan with picked forces of cavalry and infantry from Chihli, Shensi, and Heilungkiang, for they expected that a dash would be made for Peking.<sup>9</sup> With his new honors Hsiang Yung now displayed an activity that might have saved Wuchang if he had been moved to it earlier. The Taipings did not feel strong enough to hold the city indefinitely, so they seized thousands of boats, on which they launched forth on February 8, 1853, to sail down the Yangtse River. At this time they were said to number half a million souls, men, women, and children. They must have presented a sight to Hsiang as he allowed them thus to spread their sails—more than

<sup>9</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-foi Chi-lueh*, II, 1b. Here it states that the rebels contemplated going north through Siangyang, but realised that Honan was too well defended to justify such a move.

ten thousand boats comprising their fleet—and depart to set up the Celestial Kingdom at Nanking.<sup>10</sup>

This great multitude<sup>11</sup> skirted the two banks of the river, plundering the various towns which they passed. The Nanking viceroy, who had been awaiting them near Wusueh, at the border of his domain, suddenly felt it necessary to fall back on Nanking. This conviction was partly the result of cowardice, and partly due to the small force at his command. He had sent forward a *tsungping* to stop the rebels, but that officer had promptly been defeated, and the viceroy, together with the governor of Kiangsi, took to flight.<sup>12</sup> By their cowardice Kiukiang was left without defence to fall on February 17. At Anking, the governor died suddenly, leaving the provincial treasurer to hold the city, which he failed to do. It fell on the twenty-fourth of February. A week later the treasurer lost the small town to which he had retired on the fall of the capital. Thus town after town succumbed, to the dismay and disgust of the high officials in Peking. Even at Nanking the governor, who, in the absence of the viceroy should have done something for the defence of the city, moved off to Chinkiang, pretending a strategic move. The rebels stood before the outer defences of Nanking on the eighth of March and were in possession of the city on the nineteenth. The imperialists say that the Manchu garrison defended the inner city stubbornly, but the reb-

<sup>10</sup> Had the governor and Hsiang coöperated here they might have crushed the rebels or at least have driven them off. Each was trying to make the other do the work. Hung might have held Wuchang as long as he did Nanking against such generals. These men were simply a little less incompetent, not more able, than the ones who were cashiered. I make no doubt that Hung could have marched straight to Peking at this time.

<sup>11</sup> The numbers come from imperialist sources such as *P'ing-ting Yush-pei Chi-lueh*, II, 16. Sone, *Hatsuzoku Kan Shi*, places the total at 600,000.

<sup>12</sup> See *Peking Gazette*, March 16, 1853, for imperial denunciation of the viceroy and governor of Kiangsu for their cowardly conduct.

els told Mr. Meadows shortly after this that they died like bleating sheep, begging on their knees for mercy.

Forthwith a difference of opinion arose as to whether they should proceed northward or stay where they were. The T'ienwang, and possibly the Tungwang (Yang), were for an immediate march to Honan. By advancing at once they could avoid any danger from General Hsiang Yung, the imperial commissioner, who, after a short delay at Wuchang, where he arranged the affairs of that place, had set out to follow the rebels, only to be held up by a lack of boats at Kiukiang. Could they only secure themselves along the Yellow River, the Taipings would be in a favorable position to attack the capital. From this sound plan they were dissuaded by the opinion of a mere boatman, who set forth the attractions of Nanking as a capital and emphasized the difficulties in Honan, persuading the T'ienwang to establish his "Heavenly Capital" there.<sup>18</sup>

It might then have been possible for the Taipings to secure Peking with great ease. Yet this boatman may well have voiced a natural unwillingness on the part of the rank and file to proceed very far north of the Yangtse River. That stream has long formed the natural boundary between the people of North and South China. After travelling a few miles from its banks the atmosphere becomes decidedly different; you are entering the North. The river is more of a boundary than Mason and Dixon's line in the United States. Thus far we have seen the Taipings, in their progress from Kwangsi to Nanking, move like a gala procession, welcomed in spite of their bizarre religious ideas as deliverers from Manchu bondage. The moment they should cross the river and plunge into the northern provinces it would be quite otherwise. They would be strangers in the enemy's country. Few would be

<sup>18</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 6.

their recruits; more stubborn would be the resistance from government and populace. The old sailor correctly expressed the misgivings of his people.

This is not to defend the final decision of the T'ien-wang, for with a little more daring he could have made a clean sweep of it. The North was almost as unsettled as the South. The Nien rebels, who later became so great a source of annoyance and anxiety to the authorities, were already commencing their raids; the turbulent Moslems of the northwest frontier were not far from revolt. A little resolution and daring, a wise set of adjustments with these restless groups, and the objective would have been reached, the Manchus hurled from power. One cannot help reflecting that the whole course of history might have been altered if either T'ienteh or Fêng had been alive at this hour.

The resourcefulness of the Taipings was not too greatly occupied with the establishment of the Celestial Capital<sup>14</sup> to prevent reaching out for the vital strategic centers of Chinkiang and Yangchow, the former a commanding site at the intersection of the Grand Canal with the Yangtse River, the latter on the canal about twenty-five or thirty miles away, both together controlling that vital artery through which flowed the supplies of tribute grain to the capital. Lin Hung-ch'iang was put in command of the expedition that set forth for this purpose. Taking Chinkiang on March 30, he left Lo Ta-kang there, while he pressed on to the capture of Yangchow, which fell on April 1, 1853. Some time was given to strengthening their hold on these two places by securing P'ukow, a town opposite Nanking, and the stretch of country between there and Yangchow.

Meanwhile Hsiang Yung had been delayed five weeks

<sup>14</sup>The Taipings changed the name Nanking, which means "southern capital," to T'ienking, the "celestial" or "heavenly capital."

at Kiukiang and arrived before Nanking on March 30. By that time the rebels were strongly intrenched and had possession of Chinkiang. So he had to settle down to the slow siege of the place. We cannot stop to recite the details of that eleven years' siege with the countless minor engagements that gave trifling advantages now to this side and now to that. The presence of a hostile encampment outside their capital did not greatly alarm the insurgents but it altered their entire outlook on life, for they were under necessity of regarding Nanking as a camp, which throughout the long siege was constantly under martial law. Armies were apparently free to go and come at will; people with good credentials might easily pass through the city gates; foreign vessels, at least after 1860, plied up and down the Yangtse. But Nanking was no longer open to trade. Its gates were closed and guarded; its population lived on rations from the state, while husbands, fathers, and sons fought in the Taiping armies that came and went. The strictest laws were enforced within the vast camp.

The importance of Chinkiang and Yangchow insured a serious imperialist attempt to effect their recapture. In a remarkably short time Ch'ishan, an imperial commissioner, and two viceroys, Ch'eng of Chihli and Yang of the grain transport service, with four thousand cavalry and at least thirty thousand infantry, were encamped at Yangchow. But they were not able to dislodge the strongly intrenched Taipings.<sup>15</sup> Under their very noses Lin Hung-ch'iang impudently removed the women and children and even the treasure to Nanking, leaving General Tsêng Li-ch'ang to defend the city. He himself then started for the North with twenty-one "armies,"<sup>16</sup> setting out from Yangchow about the twenty-second of May.

<sup>15</sup> Sone, *Hatsusoku Ron Shi*, p. 14.

<sup>16</sup> *P'ing-t'ing Yuch-fei Chi-luck* and other Chinese books mention twenty-

After disturbing Ch'uchow and Linghwai Kwan, they captured, May 28, Fêngyang, an important prefectural city about ninety miles northwest of Yangchow. Six of the twenty-one "armies" or regiments had been detached to take Liuho and keep the region between that place and Puk'ow for the Taipings. Through the bravery of the volunteers and village braves at Liuho, this small force suffered heavy losses and was forced to return to Nan-king.

General Lin's main army, reinforced by large additions from the Eastern king, went on victoriously through northern Anhui. They were followed but never caught by Sheng Pao, who had started from Yangchow after a safe interval. Kweiteh-fu, Honan, was stormed on June 13; the capital, Kaifeng, was reached on the nineteenth, but the rebels, failing to capture it, moved on, pursued by all the imperial troops in that region. By the first of July they stood on the bank of the Yellow River at Ssushui.

There was now no place for paltering and excuses. The safety of Peking was believed to depend on keeping the rebels south of the Yellow River. Na-ur-ching-ê, viceroy of Chihli, was given supreme authority; the governors of Honan, Shantung, and Shansi were ordered to coöperate with him, and Mongol forces were summoned in all haste from Chahar. Cavalry was ordered from Heilungkiang and Hsian-fu. With such high officials and large armies converging on them, the rebels perceived how untenable their position would soon be and quietly and speedily moved away, crossing the river on coal barges. On the seventh of July they attacked Hwaik'ing-fu, but were in turn attacked by the governors named above and their

one armies. If the term 'army' is used in the technical sense it would mean twenty-one divisions of 12,500 men each. Some states that there were thirty-six regiments of more than 2,000 men each, which would make a total force of nearly 75,000. I cannot discover his authority.

generals. Ten stubborn assaults on the Taiping army failed to dislodge it, but a great storm came to the aid of the government and the insurgent army fled westward, pursued by the loyalists. In rearguard actions the Taipings lost about three thousand men. Honan was now pacified, but the rebels continued to go forward.

When they had marched westward as far as Yüankü in Shansi, the rebels turned north and captured Pingyang-fu. Na-ur-ching-ê was promptly cashiered and the discreet Sheng Pao succeeded him as imperial commissioner. The latter had conferred on him the *Sheng-chioh* sword, which gave him power to put to death any of his men of the rank of *fu-ch'iang* or below. But on their side the rebels, whose total effective force had been reduced to 20,000 men, received additional troops from Nanking under the leadership of Chu Hsieh-k'wen and Hsu Ts'ung-yang.

The rebels as thus reinforced moved with incredible speed across Shansi. Town after town fell before them, terrified by reports of their power, and on September 29 they went through the Linming pass into Chibli. In that metropolitan province they repeated their successes. Passing by or capturing Jinhsien (October 1), Lungp'ing (October 2), Peihsiang (October 2), Chaochow (October 4), Kaoching (October 6), Luanching, and Tsinchow (October 8), they came to rest at Shenchow October 9, having marched more than a hundred miles and captured five towns within ten days. Here, however, they were definitely checked by the imperial commissioner, Sheng Pao, who had followed them all the way from Yangchow, and by the various commanders whom they had eluded at Hwaiking. An attempt was made by these imperialists to storm the city (October 21); a sortie was beaten back the same day, but on the next the Taipings moved out and escaped to Fuchow, and thence to Tsinghai-hsien

which they reached on the thirty-first. This place and Tuhliu, near by, became the limit of their advance. They were a scant thirty miles from T'ientsin.<sup>17</sup>

In this recital of the progress of the Taiping rebels from their Kwangsi home to Nanking and almost to T'ientsin, we have shocking proof of the utter worthlessness of the regular armies, and the cowardice of many of the civil officials as well. The *Peking Gazette*s of the day are full of frank condemnation for magistrates, prefects, and even governors, generals, and viceroys who abandoned their posts and ran away, pretending to be sick and under necessity, in critical moments, of seeking medical aid, rushing off to recruit forces when the enemy stood at the city gates, or claiming victories when they had caught a few detached rebels and executed them, or had entered some town just abandoned by the rebels. Even Hsiang Yung, with several providential opportunities to destroy the rebellion, had always displayed his energies when it was too late, and was now settling down to a long-protracted but ineffective siege of Nanking; while Sheng Pao, who had just caught up with the rebels at the outskirts of T'ientsin, had kept them at a safe distance in front of his pursuing army, careful not to reach them lest he be defeated and disgraced.

Indeed, at this supreme moment of peril, the emperor had been obliged to overcome his aversion to the terrible Tartar tribesmen, and summon to his aid their prince, Senkolintsin, with his desert warriors. They and the Manchu forces made Tsinghai and Tuhliu the limit of Taiping advance. Even with these dreaded foes opposed to them, the rebels stubbornly held their ground for two or three months during bitter winter weather, only to be dislodged at last and forced back, step by step, to the Yellow River, where their leader received reinforcements

<sup>17</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, II, 22.



which enabled him to fight many battles before he was at last captured and his followers scattered in 1855.<sup>18</sup>

While this expedition was moving to the north under Lin Hung-ch'iang, the rebels sent expeditions up the river to recapture the cities abandoned on their way down to Nanking. One expedition in two divisions, led by Lai Han-ying and Shi Ch'iang-chen, attacked Kiukiang and hence up Poyang Lake to Nanchang.

Meanwhile Kiang Chung-yuan, whose prowess both in Kwangsi and Hunan marked him as the most capable commander on the imperial side, received appointment as provincial judge of Hupeh, with instructions to press forward to the great camp at Nanking.<sup>19</sup> He left Wuchang on May 14 with three thousand men. On the way down the river he learned that the rebels had gone to Nanchang. This was a back door to Hunan. Kiang therefore turned aside at Kiukiang and hurried to the relief of Nanchang. On arriving there he attacked the rebels in the attempt to divert them from the siege. But they remained to spring their mine on July 7. The defenders, however, prevented them from entering the breach. Three months were spent in trying to take this place; after the last attempt to storm the walls the besiegers decided to withdraw. Kiang pursued them to Kiukiang, but arrived too late to prevent them from capturing that city. The rebels had no intention of remaining there, but started up the river, defeating the viceroy at T'ienchiachen, passing Hwangchow, and eventually arriving at Hanyang, which had been rebuilt, early in October.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> The material for this chapter has been derived chiefly from the *P'ing-ting Yuch-fei Chi-lueh*; Sone, *Hatsusoku Kan Shi*, and to some extent *Yuch-fen Chi Shi*. For the northern expedition translations from the *Peking Gazette* have been useful.

<sup>19</sup> During the second moon (March 10-April 7, 1853), *Nienp'u*, II, 3a.

<sup>20</sup> *P'ing-ting Yuch-fei Chi-lueh*, II, 13-28.

A second rebel expedition captured Anking, marching by land. The Assistant king, Shi Ta-k'ai, and Hu I-kwang then went through the province of Anhui where they captured a large number of cities. Towards the end of the year the first division from Hanyang fell back on Anhui, and the whole province lay at the mercy of the rebels. On the recommendation of Tsêng Kuo-fan and others, Kiang was now appointed governor of Anhui. He proceeded to Lüchow in the attempt to hold it against the insurgents, who under the leadership of Hu I-kwang brought 100,000 men to the attack. Kiang's brother and Liu Chang-yu tried to bring reinforcements to Kiang, but found the way effectually blocked by the enemy. On the night of January 14, 1854, they made their onset. The besieged were too few. Having held the walls as long as they could against overwhelming forces they had to give way, but not before Kiang committed suicide by drowning.

This unhappy occurrence robbed the imperial cause of one of its most brilliant generals; for, although Kiang is not enrolled in China's Hall of Fame because of his premature death, it was he who first demonstrated the value of the militia against the rebels in Kwangsi. At the Soh-yi Ferry he undoubtedly saved Changsha by deflecting the Taiping line of march, thus giving time to secure the defence of Hunan's capital. With the small force at his disposal he had played an important part in the defence of that city during the siege. It was he who gave Tsêng Kuo-fan the ideas of organising an army on the same model and creating a navy for use on the waterways of central China. Had he lived to participate in the later struggles of the war his name would undoubtedly have stood with those of Tsêng, Tso Tsung-tang, and Li Hung-chang, probably at the head of the list. His work

laid the foundation for the later and more conspicuous work of Tsêng Kuo-fan.<sup>21</sup>

At the same time that Anhui was overrun by the rebels, the Eastern king, Yang, in person led a large army up the river to capture Wuchang and thus control the Yangtse above Nanking. The viceroy went to Hwangchow in the hope of intercepting them. During the New Year holiday, supposing that the Taiping vigilance would be relaxed, he launched his attacks on them (February 7, 1854), but failed and was himself defeated and killed. The rebels passed around the imperialists and the latter withdrew under the acting viceroy to Kingk'ow above Wuchang, leaving that city undefended except by the force on the walls. It fell on June 26, 1854, giving the rebels the control of the entire river as far as Nanking.

<sup>21</sup> In this estimate of Kiang Tsêng Kuo-fan is said to have concurred, according to the writer of the *Hatsuzoku Kan Shi* (p. 23). He states that when Kiang first suggested the building of a fleet Tsêng was disposed to take issue with him. Later, he goes on to say, "Kuo-fan in conversation with some one said, 'I never met a man who had the foresight of Kiang Chung-yuan; if, at some future date universal fame comes to any one, it will certainly be to this person.' " My own conclusion was set down before I discovered this statement, the source of which is not given.

## CHAPTER V

### THE RELIGION OF THE TAIPINGS

PERHAPS the most amazing feature of the rebellion was the apparent aim of the leader, Hung Siu-ch'üan, to set up a Christian kingdom in China. To read Hamburg's volume regarding his visions, written from material furnished by Hung Jin (Hung Jen-kan), later the Kanwang, we are led to think that the whole effort was purely religious and Christian, turned by nothing but imperial persecutions into an anti-dynastic rebellion. Towards the end of the rebellion "Lin Li," an Englishman, A. F. Lindley, who served under the Chungwang, accuses the nations of the West of the blackest treason to their faith in finally taking sides with the government against these Christians. He does not deny imperfections in their religious beliefs and practices, but attributes these practices, not to the fault but to the ignorance of the leaders.<sup>1</sup> The same point of view meets us in Chinese books hostile to the movement. They see nothing in the rebellion but a religious crusade against the Manchu government based on a superstition created from foreign and Christian materials.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lindley, *Ti-Ping Tien-Kwoh, the History of the Ti-Ping Revolution*, 1866.

<sup>2</sup> Most imperialist accounts are similar to this from *P'ing-ting Yueh-sei Chi-lueh*, I, 2a. "Sin-ch'üan, realising that without some superstition it would not be possible to deceive the multitude, borrowed the name of the western religion and wished to adopt and set up him whom that religion honoured as Jesus," etc.

In examining the proportion of Christianity and of Chinese ideas in the new faith, we must remind ourselves that prior to his illness Hung appears never to have heard of the new religion brought to China by the pioneer missionaries, who under great difficulties had carried on their work in Canton and Macao. Or if he had by chance heard of it he certainly could have had no adequate understanding of its teachings. His preparation for the examinations, and the teaching he did in the village schools after his failure, meant familiarity with the Confucian classics. In the absence of other instructors we must assume that he would interpret whatever the new books had to say, if there was any point of doubt or misunderstanding, in the light of the ancient Chinese writings.

We have already learned that in 1836, while attending the examinations at Canton, Hung received a set of tracts, which, we are told, he did not examine for several years.\* The next year his great visions came to him during a protracted illness. Nevertheless, for some unexplained reason, it was not until 1843, and purely by accident, that he studied the tracts and understood the meaning of the trances. Once his attention was directed to the books, however, they impressed him deeply, as we may see from his essays composed in 1845 and 1846. It is not possible for us to follow the development of his thought, because we have his earlier writings only in the form in which they appeared when published at Nanking, included in the pamphlets brought from that place by the *Hermes* in 1853. The earlier compositions were "An Ode of the Hundred Correct Things," "An Essay on the Origin of Virtue for the Awakening of the Age," "Further Exhortations for the Awakening of the Age," "Alter the Corrupt and Turn to the Correct." Three of these, to-

\* See chapter II.

• Hamberg, p. 29.

gether with "An Ode on the Origin of Virtue and the Saving of the World," comprise the "Imperial Declaration of T'haeping."

This "Declaration," embracing the work of Hung himself, supplemented by "The Book of Religious Precepts of the T'haeping Dynasty," "The Trimetrical Classic," "Ode for Youth," "The Book of Celestial Decrees and Declarations of the Divine Will, made during the Heavenly Father's descent upon Earth," and some of the proclamations issued from time to time give us the chief materials in English for the study of the Taiping religion. Much of this material has recently been made available in Chinese through the publication of the *Unofficial History of the Celestial Kingdom of Taiping*.<sup>5</sup>

Hung grasped the great thought of the supremacy of God in the creation and preservation of the world, but it is not quite apparent that he understood that this supreme God stood alone. In one of the proclamations it is stated that "God, the Heavenly Father and Supreme Lord is the only true God; there are no other Gods but God the Heavenly Father and Supreme Lord. God the Heavenly Father is all wise, all powerful and everywhere present. He is in all things Supreme. Every man is created and supported by Him. He only is Supreme." "God, the Heavenly Father and Supreme Lord is the Father of Spirits, the Father of Souls."<sup>6</sup> If this stood alone we should consider that they were true monotheists, but the following passage from "The Trimetrical Clas-

<sup>5</sup> *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi* (published by the Wen Ming Book Co.), Shanghai, 1923. The manuscript was discovered by chance several years ago and is supposed to be the work of a secretary in the movement. It is very valuable.

<sup>6</sup> Edict from the T'ienwang supposed to have been issued in Yungan in 1851. I have quoted from translation made of the copy brought down from Nanking in the *Hermes*, published in the *N. C. Herald*, May 7, 1853. The translation in the pamphlets differs slightly, chiefly in the choice of words.

sic," which, if not written by Hung himself, at least has his imprimatur, leads us to doubt whether even the leader understood monotheism in the Christian sense. The passage described Hung's ascent to heaven after his first encounter with the king of Hades:

He returned to Heaven  
Where the great God  
Gave him great authority.  
The celestial mother was kind,  
And exceedingly gracious,  
Beautiful and noble in the extreme,  
Far beyond all compare.

The celestial elder brother's wife  
Was virtuous, and very considerate,  
Constantly exhorting the elder brother  
To do things deliberately.

God is pictured in that poem as having a divine consort, and the celestial elder brother, who is Jesus, also has a wife. The monotheistic God of the former quotation has thus come to be a heavenly Father with wife and son and daughter-in-law.<sup>7</sup> One's impression is that, unskilled as Hung was in the subtleties of Western theology, he has interpreted the Christian doctrine of the Trinity in a tritheistic sense, grasping, however, the idea that the three persons of the Trinity are members of the same family, the other two being subordinate to the Father just as members of a Chinese family are to its head. It is against the usurpation of God's place by false spirits and the images representing them that Hung and his followers did battle. The implication that there were other celestial beings is latent in the idea that God is

<sup>7</sup> There is a possibility that reference to female divinities may be due to Roman Catholic teachings—if Hung had ever heard of them—or to a misunderstanding of accounts of the virgin birth.

married and Jesus also, for Chinese practice requires the marrying of a person having a certain name into a family of a different name. Heaven must, therefore, have had other families, inferior to God's but sufficiently high to furnish consorts to the supreme divine family.

As regards the scheme of salvation and the work of Jesus in the world, there is a passage in "The Trimetrical Classic" which almost exactly paraphrases the words of John 3:16:

But the great God  
Out of pity to mankind,  
Sent his first-born son  
To come down into the world.

His name is Jesus,  
The Lord and Saviour of men,  
Who redeems them from sin  
By the endurance of extreme misery.

Those who believe will be saved  
And ascend up to heaven;  
But those who do not believe  
Will be the first to be condemned.

If we search through the odes, essays, and proclamations referred to as our sources, we may discover other references of the same kind showing some acquaintance with the Scriptures of the West. But there is little evidence that Hung and his followers comprehended the inner teachings of Christianity. The spiritual virtues of humility, charity, purity of heart, forgiveness, and yearning for fellowship with God and Christ, are wanting altogether or have been transformed into a Confucian interpretation of virtue in terms of right conduct. The vices and evils of the age are attacked and the great virtues



held up as ideals, but the voice that speaks is that of Confucius, not Christ. One looks in vain for any religious consolation for those who are in need.

The chief teachings are that one must believe in God and practice virtue, in particular by obeying the commandments. It is assumed that one can do this through his own efforts. Blessings come to those who stand in awe of Heaven's decrees and practice virtue and uprightness, they wield power in the state and enjoy the favor of Heaven. Filial piety and correct sexual relations—that is, respect for the conjugal rights of others—stand as the chief virtues. Abstention from vice is also enjoined, from lewdness, disobedience to parents, killing or maiming the people,<sup>8</sup> robbery and theft, witchcraft and sorcery, gambling, opium smoking, wine drinking, and resorting to geomancers or fortune tellers.<sup>9</sup>

Hung's favorite argument is that the ancient Chinese literature and the sacred books of the West taught the same thing, namely, that Shangti, the Supreme God whom the ancients worshipped and for whom the emperors still maintained the sacrifices at the altar of Heaven, was the same God worshipped in the West. This led him to place the Bible and the Classics side by side and use them equally as authorities in his teachings. This in itself was enough to win the hostility of the scholar caste throughout the empire. A quotation from "The Trimetrical Clas-

<sup>8</sup> He bases this largely on the ground that if you kill others or injure them you will bring hurt to yourself.

"From of old those who have killed others, have afterwards killed themselves;

Who will say that the eyes of Heaven are not opened wide?

From of old those who have saved others have thereby saved themselves

And their souls have been taken up to the Heavenly courts. . . .

Do as you would be done by and you will always be right."

<sup>9</sup> See "Ode on Correct Conduct and Origin of Virtue for the Saving of the World."

sio'' will best summarise his appeal to the Chinese to follow his faith :

Throughout the whole world,  
There is only one God [Shangti] ;  
The great Lord and Ruler,  
Without a second.  
The Chinese in early ages,  
Were regarded by God ;  
Together with foreign states  
They walked in one way.  
From the time of Pwankoo,  
Down to the three dynasties,  
They honored God,  
As history records.  
T'hang of the Shang dynasty,  
And Wan of the Chow,  
Honored God  
With the intensest feeling.  
The inscription on T'hang's bathing-tub  
Inculcated daily renovation of mind ;  
And God commanded him,  
To assume the government of the empire.  
Wan was very respectful,  
And intelligently served God ;  
So that the people who submitted to him,  
Were two out of every three.  
When Tsin obtained the empire,  
He was infatuated with the genii ;  
And the nation has been deluded by the devil  
For the last two thousand years. . . .

Ming, of the Han dynasty,  
Welcomed the institutions of Buddha,  
And set up temples and monasteries  
To the great injury of the country.  
But Hwuy, of the Sung dynasty,  
Was still more mad and infatuated,

For he changed the name of Shang-te [God]  
Into that of Yuh-hwang [the pearly emperor].  
But the great God  
Is the supreme Lord  
Over all the world,  
The great Father in heaven.  
His name is most honorable,  
To be handed down through distant ages;  
Who was this Hwuy  
That he dared alter it?  
It was meet that this same Hwuy  
Should be taken by the Tartars;  
And together with his son  
Perish in the northern desert.  
From Hwuy; of the Sung dynasty,  
Up to the present day,  
For these seven hundred years.  
Men have sunk deeper and deeper in error.

With the doctrine of God  
They have not been acquainted;  
While the King of Hades  
Has deluded them to the uttermost.

Having earlier in this same poem outlined the Biblical story of the creation and the revelation of God to the Israelites, His compassion and power in the deliverance from Egypt and the Red Sea, His care for them in the wilderness, the promulgation of the Ten Commandments, and finally, when they had wandered from the right way, the sending of His first-born son to deliver them from their evil, Hung now goes on to claim his place in the divine plan, which is that he also has been commissioned to bring knowledge of God into the world, to do the same work for China that Jesus did for the West in bringing the people back to the worship of the great and supreme God whom once they followed.

The great God displays  
Liberality deep as the sea;  
But the devil has injured man,  
In a most outrageous manner.  
God is therefore displeased,  
And has sent his Son  
With orders to come down into the world,  
Having first studied the classics.  
In the Ting-yew year [1837]  
He was received up into Heaven,  
Where the affairs of Heaven  
Were clearly pointed out to him.  
The great God  
Personally instructed him,  
Gave him odes and documents,  
And communicated to him the true doctrine.  
God also gave him a seal,  
And conferred upon him a sword  
Connected with authority  
And majesty irresistible.  
He bade him, together with the elder brother,  
Namely Jesus,  
To drive away impish fiends<sup>3</sup>  
With the coöperation of angels.

The poem goes on from this point to relate how the king of Hades envied him and displayed much malignity, but God instructed His son (Hung) how to subdue him and his "imps," which he eventually did, ascending again to heaven to receive God's further commission to return to the world and carry out his mission, promising to be with him and superintend everything.

We cannot be certain who were the adversaries he met in this first battle. The poem records what appears to be something different from the mere hostile or cynical attitude of members of the family or village, and may possibly refer to some earlier disturbances with rivals, such

as the account of God's descents in 1848 records, possibly an earlier encounter with Hung Ta-ch'üan, or unrecorded struggles with the authorities. If it is tantalizing at this point, the passage nevertheless does throw light on the relation which Hung Siu-ch'üan thought he sustained to God. He gives honor to Jesus as the first-born son of God, but likewise claims an equality as God's second son.<sup>10</sup> Against this complete identification of himself as a full member of God's family there are certain passages where he refuses certain imperial titles, such as *Ti*, which to him can mean nothing but "God" and cannot rightfully be applied to any mortal, and in the same manner will not permit the application to him of the term *sheng*, or holy, on the ground that this title can rightfully be applied only to God, and to the celestial elder brother, Saviour of the World.<sup>11</sup>

In an earlier chapter we have seen that in the year 1848, owing to struggles between the leaders, two men received special signs of divine favor, when in the third and ninth moons of that year God the Father descended into the world and spoke to the multitudes through Yang, later the king of the East, and Jesus through Hsiao, king of the West. These possessions came several times during the next two years, but Hsiao was killed before Changsha, and Yang alone shared with Hung the honor of speaking for God. As the movement progressed and Hung retired more and more into the depths of the palace, Yang gained the control of the government, which he exercised practically alone until he was killed in the dissensions of 1856. Yang gradually appropriated to himself the titles of Comforter, Holy Ghost, *Ho-nai* teacher, and Re-

<sup>10</sup> In one of the proclamations recorded in Brine, p. 229 (verse 5), he says, "Our uterine Elder Brother is Jesus."

<sup>11</sup> Proclamation of the Celestial King, Nov. 30, 1851, in the "Book of Celestial Decrees."

deemer from Disease.<sup>12</sup> This attempt on the part of Yang to identify himself with the Holy Ghost encroached on the place Hung held by reason of his earlier visions and was accompanied by treasonable political actions. But it helps us to understand Hung's position, which was that God as Father, and Jesus as elder brother, had prerogatives on which a younger brother must not encroach, but that he was nevertheless more than mortal man. This identification of himself with the heavenly family did not raise troublesome questions of speculative theology; there is no argument about the possibility of holding such a relationship: he holds it as a matter of faith and conviction.

Here we see the fruit of an unguided Confucian mind working on materials recorded in the Bible, which Hung accepted literally and turned to his own purposes. As he progresses in his thought he finds himself farther and farther away from the teachings of the Protestant Christianity with which he had first come into contact at Canton. He is a prophet and son of God in his own right; he is willing to accept little or no guidance from the teachers of the foreign faith, though he must recognize that they represent the worship of the same God. It is for them to come to him for enlightenment, for he has come direct

<sup>12</sup> The full title of Yang in Chinese was Yang, The Comforter, The Holy Ghost, Ho-nai Teacher, Saviour from Disease, General of the Left Wing of the Main Army. "He [Yang] has applied to himself the terms employed in Gutzlaff's Version of the New Testament for 'the Comforter,' and that used by Morrison to designate the Holy Ghost." (From an anonymous writer "X.Y.Z." in the *N. C. Herald*, quoted in Brine, p. 196.) To the same effect Dr. Bridgman, who was also on the *Susquehanna* expedition to Nanking, 1854, p. 192. Yang was then at the height of his power, when he was having his name inserted in the doxology where the Holy Ghost is praised, and omitting the name of the T'ienwang altogether. It comes at a time when Yang is usurping the powers of government and reproving the T'ienwang; it is one of the things leading eventually to Yang's overthrow.

from the presence of God, and the Holy Ghost incarnate dwells in the court at Nanking.

Such blasphemous claims alienated the foreign representatives who came to Nanking in 1853 and 1854. We shall consider more in detail later the reports they made to their home governments both on the political and the religious sides. Had they been met by a different type of leaders at Nanking, had they not been more or less offended by the religious extravagances and claims, it is not improbable that they would have accorded recognition. The American expedition in 1854 appeared just at the moment when Yang was at the height of his power. Those to whom the American commissioner addressed himself sent in reply, among other things, this bombastic mandate, carrying us back in spirit to the days when the question of embassies to Peking and their status was a burning issue:

If you do indeed respect Heaven and recognise the Sovereign, then our celestial court, viewing all under Heaven as one family and uniting all nations as one body, will most assuredly regard your faithful purpose and permit you year by year to bring tribute and annually come to pay court, so that you may become the ministers and people of the celestial Kingdom, forever bathing yourselves in the gracious streams of the Celestial Dynasty, peacefully residing in your own lands, and living quietly, enjoy great glory. This is the sincere desire of us the great ministers. Quickly ought you to conform to and not oppose this mandatory dispatch.<sup>13</sup>

Is it surprising that he did not accord the recognition which he was authorised to grant the Taiping government in case he found there any hope of an enlightened policy?<sup>14</sup> "Whatever may have been the hopes of the en-

<sup>13</sup> 35 Cong., 2 Senate Exec. Doc. 22, Part 1, 62 f.

<sup>14</sup> Foster, *American Diplomacy in the Orient*, p. 211, states that he had this authority.

lightened and civilised nations of the earth in regard to this movement, it is now apparent that they neither profess nor apprehend Christianity, and whatever may be the true judgment to form of their political power, it can no longer be doubted that intercourse cannot be established or maintained on terms of equality."

If we have correctly interpreted his writings, Hung's religious views unfolded themselves to him in a form somewhat as follows: "The missionaries from the West are preaching Shangti (God); the supreme God of the ancient Chinese classics was also Shangti. Confucius might have revealed Him more fully to the nation and thus prevented apostasy, but he failed to do so. In later dynasties the rulers forsook Him altogether, going so far as to change His name. In the West, however, Jesus appeared in due time and became the Saviour, through whose sacrifice the nations of the West retained the worship of Shangti. Therefore, we must accept the Scriptures of the West and our own pre-Confucian accounts of Shangti, interpreting the writings in terms of each other. But China is in a hopeless condition; God must interpose again here as he did in the West, and the visions that came to me in 1837 are his call to me to do here what Jesus did for the whole world. God has revealed to me through these visions that I am the full brother of Jesus, the second son of God. Therefore I am in a position to receive and interpret his messages directly; I am one of the Godhead."

Eventually, after congregations were built up on the basis of Hung's divine pretensions, ambitious men like Yang and Hsiao, claiming to be divine oracles, somewhat limited Hung's sacrosanct standing and led the movement into greater extravagances.

Claiming to be of divine parentage, Hung firmly believed that God would care for him and his enterprise.



From the evidence of the Chungwang he was not shaken in this view until immediately before the capture of Nan-king. "Relying sincerely on Heaven, he was unwilling to trust men. Everything whatsoever was from Heaven."<sup>15</sup> The Chungwang begged him several times to leave the spot on which the imperialists were steadily closing in, but the T'ienwang was unwilling to depart. An anecdote is preserved in one of the imperialistic sources, showing the confidence of the T'ienwang in divine protection. The Chungwang had been reciting the difficulties which encompassed them and the great desirability of leaving for some other place, such as Kiangsi. The T'ienwang then said to him: "I received God's holy mandate, the command of the Heavenly Father and the Heavenly Elder Brother that I should descend to earth to become the true lord of the nine provinces and ten thousand lands. Wherefore should I fear whether you leave or remain in your office? With iron bands I encircle the rivers and hills. If you do not aid, there are those who will. My celestial soldiers number a million, yea ten million. How will the impish soldiers be able to come [literally, fly] into our midst?"<sup>16</sup>

Another recorded incident is said to have taken place in 1858 when a cannon ball pierced the roof and fell at the feet of the T'ienwang during a feast. While the rest of the party blanched with fear he laughed and said to the generals: "I have received Heaven's command and mounted the throne as T'ienwang. What to me are a million demon soldiers or the falling of cannon balls like rain, or even their generals?"<sup>17</sup>

These particular articles in his faith prevented the

<sup>15</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 186.

<sup>16</sup> P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh, II, 11. Cf. *Autobiography*, pp. 37, 62, for similar speeches.

<sup>17</sup> *Hatsusoku Ban Shi*.

T'ienwang from taking as active a part in the government as he might have done. Not infrequently the plans of the abler generals were frustrated by his overconfidence in divine power and unwillingness to take the necessary steps to win victories or avoid defeat. On this point the Chungwang thus levels his accusation against him: "The chief gave himself no concern about either the nation or the people, but buried in the recesses of his palace he never left the palace gate. When one proceeded to memorialise him upon internal affairs and to make suggestions pertinent to the preservation of the kingdom he would invariably greet you with assertions about heaven and earth—subjects totally irrelevant to the main argument or point of view."<sup>18</sup>

Not only did Hung claim divinity for himself, but his son, Hung Fu-t'ien, was proclaimed as God's grandson. In an edict of 1860<sup>19</sup> we find these remarkable statements: "The Father and Elder Brother have descended upon earth and established the heavenly kingdom, and have taken me and the Junior Lord to regulate affairs pertaining to this world. Father, Son, and Royal Grandson are together Lord of the new heaven and earth. The Saviour and the Junior Lord are sons of the Heavenly Father; also the Great Brother's ('hrist's son, and my son is Lord. The Father and the Elder Brother, together with me, three persons constitute one, etc." From the curious wording of this edict it might appear that Hung had come to regard his own son as the adopted son of Jesus the Saviour in order that he might maintain the divine succession.

As to the popular religion we discover that the Taipings were careful, wherever they went, to establish their worship under the supervision of the officials. Morning

<sup>18</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 62.

<sup>19</sup> Brine, pp. 226 f.

and evening and at meal time prayers were offered. On the seventh day of the week the people were aroused from their beds to offer midnight prayers, and towards noon a general service was held, together with another of the same kind in the evening.

These services as described by Lindley ("Lin Li"), who was several times an eyewitness, began by chanting the doxology, which in the earlier version was very similar to that used in Protestant churches today. After the religion became more erratic, this was expanded to include ascriptions of praise to the various *wangs*, and, at least from 1853 to 1856, placed the Eastern king, Yang, in the place of the Holy Ghost. It read as follows:

Praise the Supreme Ruler, who is the Holy Heavenly Father,  
the one only true God.

Praise the Heavenly Elder Brother, the Saviour of the world,  
who laid down his life for men.

Praise the Eastern King, the Holy Divine Breath [Holy Ghost],  
who atones for faults and saves men.

Praise the Western King, the rain-teacher, an high-as-heaven  
upright man.

Praise the Northern King, the thunder-teacher, an high-as-heaven  
benevolent man.

Praise the Southern King, the cloud-teacher, an high-as-heaven  
honorable man.

Praise the Assistant King, the lightning-teacher, an high-as-  
heaven righteous man.

This was followed by the hymn:

How different are the true doctrines from the doctrines of the  
world.

They save the souls of men, and lead to the enjoyment of endless  
bliss:

The wise receive them with exultation as the source of their  
happiness,

The foolish, when awakened, understand thereby the way to heaven.

Our Heavenly Father, of his great mercy and unbounded goodness,

Spared not his first-born Son, but sent him down into the world  
To give his life for the redemption of all our transgressions,  
The knowledge of which coupled with repentance saves the souls  
of men.<sup>20</sup>

The hymn was followed by a reading from the Bible, after which their creed was recited. I have not been able to find the text of the creed. The congregation then knelt down and a prayer was read by the leader to be repeated by the throng. Such a prayer, used in a service where the higher *wangs* are present, is given in one of the imperialist accounts of the rebellion, and runs as follows:<sup>21</sup>

Thy humble child, —, together with the other humble worshippers, kneel on the ground to pray to the Father, the Lord above, the supreme God, our own venerable Father,<sup>22</sup> and to the heavenly Elder Brother, Christ, our own great Brother. Now, in the — month, — day, at the hour of worship, we have reverently set forth our offerings of tea, fruit and candles and offered our oblation of song, to praise Thy heavenly grace. We beseech the heavenly Father to grant us the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to awaken the rulers and people of all nations in the world, that soon, with repentant hearts, they may together praise God, the heavenly Father, altogether powerful and of infinite peace. Bless thy children; in every battle make them victorious. May all things be as they desire. Grant them clothing and food, freedom from calamity and difficulty. Vouchsafe them constant peace, and may they all enter into glory, among the sons of Heaven forever. In the merit of the Saviour, the true Holy Lord,

<sup>20</sup> They are in couplets of six characters each, and may be found in the *Taiping T'ien Kuo Yeh Shi*, IV, 19.

<sup>21</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, II, 2b.

<sup>22</sup> The characters used for "Father" are different. Above it is *Fu*, here *Yeh*.

the heavenly elder Brother, he who saves from sin, and of the *Ho Nai* teacher who saves from disease. Finally we beseech the heavenly Father, the supreme Lord, the great God, the sacred intelligence in Heaven, and on earth as in Heaven, grant us the desires of our hearts for which we have prayed.

Taiping T'ien Kuo, — year, — month, — day.

The prayer was followed by a sermon read from a paper which was afterwards burned reverently. The whole congregation then stood and, to the accompaniment of musical instruments, wished long life to the T'ienwang. This was followed by the reading of the Ten Commandments with the annotations to each. The commandments were very short, quoting the substance of each of the Biblical commandments without the modifying clauses that are given in the Bible. After these had been read the accompanying hymn was chanted and firecrackers and incense were burned.<sup>22</sup>

The Ten Commandments as interpreted by the Taipings formed so important a part of the popular religion, and their enforcement was so emphasised that it is worth while setting them down in detail. They stand at the end of a group of prayers prescribed for different occasions, and are introduced by a brief account of the origin of these commands.

### THE BOOK OF THE HEAVENLY LAW

What human being has not broken the Law of Heaven? In former times those who knew it not could give an excuse; now the Supreme God has set forth His merciful ordinance. From henceforth all who do repent of their sins before the supreme God, do not worship false gods, commit no evil actions, and do

<sup>22</sup> Lindley, *T'iping T'ien-kuoh*, I, 319-321. The Ten Commandments with the comments on them are found translated in *Pamphlets*, no 1; also in Brine, appendix. In the original they are found in *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, IV, 19-21.

not break the heavenly laws, will be permitted to ascend to Heaven and enjoy endless happiness and majesty everlasting. All who fail to repent of their sins before the Supreme God, who wittingly worship false gods, do evil deeds and break the heavenly laws shall be condemned to the punishment of Hell, there to suffer eternal woe and sorrow unrelieved forever. Please consider for yourself which of these you would gain and which lose.

There is such a thing as failure on the part of our brothers and sisters everywhere to wake up. If we do not awaken eventually, we deteriorate, the devil surely leads us astray, and we have at hand indeed a happiness which we know not how to enjoy. Endless majesty in high heaven together with intense joy like this we are unwilling to experience; but are prone through our inclinations to follow the sin of resisting Heaven. In that way we greatly provoke the righteous anger of the Supreme God, and for punishment sink through the eighteen great Hells to suffer everlasting woe. How pitiable!

Now, there are those whose natural affections have been turned away by the Devil, who emphatically say that the rulers alone may offer worship to the Supreme God.

The Supreme God is the father of all human beings everywhere. The rulers are His powerful sons, good men are His filial sons, the masses are His simple sons, and the oppressors His perverse sons. Since they say that rulers alone may offer worship to the Supreme God, let me therefore ask the parents in the home, is it possible that only the elder sons may be filial to their parents?

There are also those who recklessly say that the worship of the Supreme God comes from foreign [literally, 'barbarian'] lands. They do not know that in the ancient times everybody—rulers and people alike—revered the Supreme God. As a matter of fact this highway of worship to the Supreme God is the great road on which China and foreign lands have walked together since the beginning when, in six days, God created Heaven and earth, mountains and seas and all human beings. Only, the various nations of the west have constantly traveled on this highway, whereas China walked on it for a millennium or two until she wandered off to the Devil's road, until she was ensnared by

the imps of Hell. Wherefore the Supreme God now has compassion on those who inhabit the earth, and stretches out His mighty arm to help men escape from the clutches of the Devil, to cause them to turn and walk once more on this original highway, that they may not suffer the evil influences of the Devil before birth nor be caught by the Devil after death, but may ascend to Heaven and enjoy everlasting bliss. This is God's special favour, His incomparable grace. How greatly has that man's nature been deluded by the Devil who will not awaken, but on the contrary says that these things come from foreign lands!<sup>24</sup>

The Ten Commandments, which formed an integral and prominent part in their worship, occur in their form of worship with text, comment, and a four-line stanza appropriate to the particular commandment.

Constantly observe the ten Heavenly laws.

(The ten commandments are ordained by God.)

The first Heavenly law: Render worship to the Supreme God.

(The Supreme God is Father of all nations under heaven.

All men are created and nourished by Him, all men are preserved by Him. All men ought reverently to adore Him morning and night, giving thanks for his mercy. The proverb says, 'Heaven bears, Heaven nourishes, Heaven preserves.' Another proverb says, 'In procuring food do not deceive Heaven.' Wherefore all who do not worship the Supreme God break the heavenly law.)

The Supreme God of Heaven is the true God;

Each morn and eve His worship should freely rise.

The ten divine commands should be observed,

Lest the Devil delude and darken one's true nature.

The second Heavenly law: Do not worship false gods.

(The Supreme God says, 'Aside from Me you shall have no other gods.' Wherefore, apart from the Supreme God,

<sup>24</sup> *Taiiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, IV, 13 f. The idea of eighteen great hells is Buddhist.

all are false gods who deceive and harm the people on earth. By no means must they be worshipped. Whoever worships a single one of the false gods breaks the heavenly law.)

False demons with the greatest ease influence the spirits of men. Those who in error accept them at last become Hell's own victims.

We warn you, oh you brave souls, that you arouse yourselves, And make haste to come into fellowship with your Almighty heavenly Father.

The third Heavenly law: Do not lightly utter God's name.

(The Supreme God was originally named Jehovah. Human beings must not utter the name in an unseemly manner. Those who do this, and those who curse Heaven, break the Heavenly law.)

High and majestic is the Heavenly Father! greatly to be revered,

They who rashly take his name soon come to grief.

Those who know not the true way should bestir themselves, For to blaspheme lightly is an endless sin.

The fourth Heavenly law: On the seventh day offer worship and sing praise to the kindness of the Supreme God.

(On the sixth day God completed the creation of Heaven and earth, mountains and seas and human beings. The seventh day he had completed his work and called it the Sabbath day. Therefore men of this world who enjoy the blessings of the Supreme God should on the seventh day especially adore, worship and sing praises to the virtue of the Supreme God.)

Every blessing enjoyed on earth comes forth from Heaven; To chant (Heaven's) virtue and sing his merit is surely reasonable.

Morning and night and at meals we should render thanks But with greater reverence should we worship on each recurring seventh day.



**The fifth Heavenly law : Be filial towards parents.**

(The Supreme God says that if you are filial towards parents you can live long. Those who are intractable towards them break the Heavenly law.)

The records say that Shun was most filial to life's close,  
For both lowly parents he prepared the utmost happiness  
Exalting them to the skies. Such deserve to be requited  
Since they failed not to care for us even before our birth !

**The sixth Heavenly law : Do not kill or injure men.**

(To kill others is to kill yourself ; to injure others is to injure yourself. They who kill or injure others break Heaven's law.)

All under Heaven form a single family, all are brothers.  
Why endure the cruel slaying and injuring of life ?  
Our forms and endowments are all the gift of Heaven ;  
If each follows each great tranquillity will result.

**The seventh Heavenly law : Do not hold illicit intercourse.**

(The many men on earth are a group of brothers ; the many women on earth are a group of sisters. The sons and daughters of Heaven are arranged in companies, men with men and women with women, and they are not to be thrown together. When men and women indulge in illicit relations they may be called reprobates, transgressors to the highest degree of Heaven's law. Similarly, to cast lustful glances, to entertain lustful desire towards another, also to smoke opium and sing licentious songs, are transgressions of Heaven's law.)

Unlawful desire is by far the chief evil.

It transforms men into reprobates, then into fiends most pitiable.  
Whoever hopes to enjoy the true bliss of Heaven  
Must come through self denial and bitter discipline.

**The eighth Heavenly law : Do not steal or rob.**

(Poverty and wealth are alike determined by the Supreme God. Whoever steals men's things or takes them by force breaks Heaven's law.)

Though poor, accept your lot with contentment; you need not steal;

Perverse robbery is most base.

Violence to men reacts on him who does it—

Manly men, why not quickly change your course?

The ninth Heavenly law: Do not utter falsehoods.

(Whoever utters deceptions or tells of strange matters, whoever indulges in any kind of vile language or foul speech breaks Heaven's law.)

Falsehoods and bad language are all to be spurned;

Perverse deceitfulness sins against Heaven.

Multiplied evils of speech react on the speaker,

Diligently and closely cultivate the field of your heart.

The tenth Heavenly law: Do not covet.

(One who sees another's wife and covets that person's wife; when he sees that one's possessions are good and covets his possessions; also playing for stakes and the like—all violate Heaven's law.)

Those who are men must not covet at all,

The sea of desire engulfs one, its calamity is deep;

Before Mount Sinai was the law proclaimed,

In every clause the Heavenly commands glow to this hour!

They who turn and believe in the heavenly Father, the Supreme God, finally attain happiness;

They who harden their necks and rebel against the heavenly Father, the Supreme God, have weeping only.

Those who honor the Heavenly laws and worship the true God, when they depart, mount with ease to Heaven;

Those who follow worldly customs and believe in demons, on reaching the end, can scarce escape Hell.

Those soaked in the belief of false gods have become the complete slaves of the false gods—

Whom at birth tormenting devils suckle, who at death are seized by devils.

Those who respectfully worship God, are forthwith God's sons and daughters—

Their place of origin is descent from Heaven, their destined place is to ascend to Heaven.

Heaven above holds sway  
You must nowise fear.  
True hearts have much proof  
They rightly may reach Heaven.

With pure heart honor God ;  
Trust not bad men's lies ;  
All desires curb entirely—  
Then you can reach Heaven.

In Heaven the true spirit is one God ;  
All who walk in error are utterly wanting in knowledge.  
They bow down low to lumps of clay and images of wood—  
For how long, pray, will your understanding be lacking ?

From Heaven, they wildly say it comes from foreign lands,—  
In truth all men are foolish and stupid—  
The ancient princes and people followed God.  
Heroes, hasten, the devil defeat and close the gate.

Obey Heaven and obtain happiness ; oppose Heaven and perish.  
To what end do the people of earth debate faults and virtues ?  
Behold you were not originally idols' sons,  
Why are you unwilling to turn toward Heaven ?

These commands were held in such honor that not only were they required to be read each week at the great gatherings for public worship, but also under penalty of death each recruit was compelled to memorise them within three weeks.<sup>25</sup> Obedience also was required to all the commands by prescribing death for any infraction of them. The seventh commandment, however, was by so far the most important that its violation by one of the older

<sup>25</sup> See the laws published in *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, VII, 4-8.

members of their community was punished by the terrible process known as lighting the lamp of heaven, or burning to death after having been wrapped in paper or coarse cloth and dipped in oil, a punishment ordinarily reserved for treason.<sup>26</sup> At least on the march, and probably within Nanking, the Taipings were so concerned about the relation between men and women that they carefully regulated the conditions on which husbands and wives should meet. The Western king is said to have put his own father and mother to death because they broke the commandment, saying of them to the assembled army: "Parents who transgress the Heavenly law are unfit to be parents."<sup>27</sup>

Such strict interpretations of the commands must have been greatly relaxed after the first year or two of the movement, if not earlier. For the T'ienwang himself filled his palace with women, and the relations of Yang with the adopted sister of the T'ienwang caused the Western king to desire his punishment by the same laws; from which Yang delivered himself by an oracle from God which said: "Siu-ch'ing and Hsuen-chiao have both proceeded from the Heavenly Father and are therefore full brother and sister; though they are together constantly there is nothing blameworthy in it."<sup>27</sup> If such conditions existed in the higher ranks of the movement it is scarcely possible that they could enforce the rigid laws for long among the rank and file.

On one point the commandments and comments laid particular emphasis—the evil of idolatry. This led to a ruthless iconoclasm. Wherever the rebels went temples and idols, together with sacrificial vessels, were destroyed without regard to their value. In this way they destroyed relics and ancient sacrificial vessels worth

<sup>26</sup> *Tai ping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, VII, 2.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, XII, 12.

their weight in gold.<sup>28</sup> One can still discover places once famous for temples which have now become a wilderness through their destructive efforts.

The training of the people in the doctrines of their religion was a matter of great care on the part of the higher officials. The attendance on Sabbath worship was compulsory; indeed, for officials of all grades more than compulsory. For they were apparently regarded as the leaders, possibly the teachers or priests of the movement. In every hamlet or district of twenty-five families one of the officers was responsible for conducting the religious services, and at least once a month a great assembly was called together from twenty-five of these parishes to hear some prince or high officer preach. No official could be absent from these great gatherings without ample excuse. For the first offence he was pilloried for seven weeks and beaten with a thousand blows; for the second he was put to death.<sup>29</sup> The addresses delivered on these great occasions, if Lindley's quotation of one of those he heard be a fair sample, were nothing more than patriotic addresses, calling on the officers and people to follow the T'ienwang until the empire was won.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to the doxology and the hymn that followed it, the rebels prescribed forms and prayers for important occasions. In the repentance of sins, after the regular prayer was offered, the penitent was commanded to wash himself either in a basin of water or by immersing himself in a river. This was apparently their understanding of the ceremony of baptism. After this he must ask God for the guidance of His Spirit, must regularly offer prayer at meals, worship with the throng on the seventh day, observe the Ten Commandments, and abstain from

<sup>28</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, supplementary volume, II, 11a.

<sup>29</sup> *Tai-ping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, VII, 8.

<sup>30</sup> Lindley, *Ti-Ping Tien-Kwoh*, I, 319-321.

the worship of false gods of all sorts. These observances, if faithfully carried out, would secure the favor of God and win heaven. Prayers were prescribed for such occasions as marriages, funerals, thanksgiving after childbirth, and the building of houses. During the great ceremonies of state, sacrifices of animals were probably offered; in every service offerings of tea and rice were prescribed, and in some more important cases animals and wine as well.

In all these books and poems we can see the direct influence of the Western religion, but the interpretations and the ceremonials are chiefly Chinese, Confucian and Buddhist. The foreigners at first had some thought that the Taipings were sincerely attempting to set up the Christian religion, but they were estranged and shocked at the curious claims of the latter to supernatural guidance, in particular the blasphemous pretensions of the T'ienwang and the king of the East. Though they found certain outward forms of worship which they could recognise as similar to the ordinary Protestant ceremonial and though they perceived that pains were taken to give a certain amount of instruction to the rank and file, yet they felt that there was too much that was external on the part of the followers, and too fanatical and transparently hypocritical on the part of the leaders, to allow great expectations of realising the Christian state they had hoped for when the movement arose.

It is true that a few observers believed that the Taipings erred chiefly through ignorance of the truth and through misunderstanding of what the Christian religion was; and they argued that matters would be different later if the latter were given a chance to win the empire and come into free contact with the rest of the world. They understood that the Taiping religion contained much that was wrong, little that was Christian, much that

was blasphemous, and not a little that could be traced to the mores of a primitive people. But from the standpoint of their desire to open the country to intercourse with the West there was one great advantage—these people had courageously attacked the falsehoods and errors they believed to lurk in their Chinese religions and were brave enough to adopt the foreign Bible as far as they understood it. Under them foreigners might hope for greater progress and more favorable treatment than under the hopelessly conservative Manchu court and the Confucian gentry who supported it.

From the point of view of the native culture, on the other hand, there was never a moment's question that the mongrel religion of Hung was not Chinese. The natives accordingly spurned it with indignation. But apart from some of the leaders, who of sincerity or as a means of control emphasised the new religion, the people at large can have had very little understanding of any of the deeper matters of this faith. The heavy penalties for failure to learn the commandments by heart and for failure to attend the services indicate that the religion was practically forced on the people against their will. When such men as T'ienteh and the Chungwang were caught and wrote their confessions they do not appear to have exhibited any interest in the religion, but rather in the political objects of the enterprise—even the Chungwang who gave his horse to the young T'ienwang when the city of Nanking fell to the imperialists. If these men were more or less guilty of holding their religion lightly—though in the company of those who left Kiangsi there must have been hundreds of the humbler followers who did have sincere religious aspirations—what about the nation at large?

Could they have seen anything worthy of emulation in the religious absurdities of Hung and his followers or in

the confident claims to divinity? What they saw was not a pure religion but the attempt of a group of low-born peasants and laborers to seize the throne by calling superstition to their aid. Revolutionary societies had before this used religious creeds as a pretext. The whole Tai-ping movement appeared to the nation at large as a gross mockery on its religious side, particularly discredited in the assumption of the divine sanction for actions abhorred by society, and in the application of the death penalty for so many offences. They considered it at best a cruel religion. Its frontal attack on the popular beliefs and coldness towards the Confucian teachings, which formed the religion of the scholars, alienated those masses and leaders whose adherence was necessary to the cause.

In the first march upon Nanking they seemed to discern something more than this—they saw something masterful in the well-drilled army behind the uprising, something that might deliver the land from alien Manchu domination. But when the wave had spent its first strength and the contest settled down to a series of raids without much apparent motive or purpose except plunder, while the T'ienwang remained in the depths of his palace in Nanking, apparently interested in little but his religious fantasies, the hostility of the nation rose and forces gathered that eventually swept the rebels away.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE MILITARY, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE INSURGENTS

#### A. *The Taiping Army.*

THE dash and *élan* of the rebel army excited the admiration of Chow T'ien-chieh, governor of Kwangsi, who in 1851 addressed his colleague, the governor of Hupeh, regarding the prowess of Hung and his followers:

Hung Tsuen is a barbarian, who practices the ancient military arts. At first he conceals his strength, then he puts it forth a little, then in greater degree, and lastly comes on in great force. He constantly has two victories for one defeat, for he practices the tactics of Sun Pin.<sup>1</sup> The other day I obtained a book describing the organisation of one army; it is the *Sze-ma* system of the Chow dynasty.<sup>2</sup> A division has its general of division; a regiment has its colonel [literally, a *Sze* has its *sze shwae*, a *leu* has its *leu shwae*]. An army consists of 13,270 men, being the strength of an ancient army with the addition of upward of a hundred men.<sup>3</sup>

Their forces are divided into nine armies, in accordance with the system of nine degrees in the tribute of Yu.<sup>4</sup> In this book is specifically described the first army, that of Grand Generalissimo Hung; and it states at the end, that all the other nine armies are to be arranged and organised in the same manner.

<sup>1</sup> B.C. 341.

<sup>2</sup> Under Wu Wang of the Chow Dynasty.

<sup>3</sup> Apparently Governor Chow was mistaken here, for the officers and men in the Taiping army totalled 13,125, not 13,270.

<sup>4</sup> In the *Shu Ching*.

This book has been sent to the Cabinet Council. The rebels increase more and more; our troops the more they fight the more they fear. The rebels generally are powerful and fierce; and they cannot by any means be likened to a disorderly crowd [literally, a flock of crows]; their regulation and laws being rigorous and clear. Our troops have not a tincture of discipline; retreating is easy to them, advancing difficult; and, though again and again exhorted, they always remain as weak and timorous as before.<sup>5</sup>

The *Sze-ma* system of the Chow Dynasty, set up by order of Wu Wang after the kingdom had been pacified, established armies of 12,500 men under command of the *ch'ing*, or great ministers of state. The suzerain had six armies, while his feudatory states were allowed to maintain three, two, or one according to their size. The army unit was subdivided into five legions or *shih* of 2,500 men, each under a great minister of the second grade, each legion being further divided into five battalions of five hundred men each, commanded by a great minister of lower rank. Battalions were divided into five centuries, under an officer of first rank, and each century into four companies of twenty-five men each, led by an officer of medium rank. The smallest unit was the file of five men, having its chief.<sup>6</sup>

The Taiping army was described in 1853 as follows:

A *cinquevir* commands a quaternion of soldiers, or four men. A *vezillary* commands five *cinquevirs*, having under him twenty-five men, and is distinguished by a flag two feet and a half long and as many broad.

A *centurion* commands four *vezillaries*, having under him 104 men, and is distinguished by a flag three feet long and as many broad. A *tribune* commands five centurions, having under him

<sup>5</sup> From a private letter of Chow T'ien-chieh, April, 1851, secured and translated by Meadows, *China and Her Revolutions*, pp. 154-159.

<sup>6</sup> Kwang chih p'ing lueh hsu chi, c. 25 Chou tia ping chih, 1-a (in Werner's volume of *Descriptive Sociology*, Spencer, IX, 108, col. 1).

525 men, and is distinguished by a flag three feet and a half long and as many broad.

A *prefect* commands five tribunes, having under him 2,625 men and is distinguished by a flag four feet long and as many broad. A *dux* commands five prefects, having under him 13,125 men, and is distinguished by a flag four and one half feet long and as many broad.<sup>7</sup>

This *dux*, or brigadier general, as he may be called, had above him an inspector, a regulator, and a generalissimo, one of these for each complete army, the flag of each being half a foot larger than of the officer below. Above these in turn were a director, an arranger, and a minister of state. In the completed Taiping scheme there were said to be ninety-five armies of land forces, nine of naval forces on the rivers and lakes, two of engineering forces, sappers, miners, and the like, and six of metal workers, wood workers, and other artificers. The total number of officers, men, and other employees of the armies, including secretaries and servants, is given as 3,085,021.<sup>8</sup>

The officers named above were commoners. Above them stood those who had rank as nobles or princes and kings. Some of them held active commands in the military forces and some were apparently in the civil government. The Eastern and Western kings had flags nine and a half feet square, and down to the fourth grade of kings the flags were square; the fourth grade of kings, the nobles, and the higher military officers, down to the generalissimo, had triangular flags with borders; all the others had triangular flags without borders. The size of the flags was half a foot smaller for each grade below. The seals were

<sup>7</sup> "Arrangement of the Army of the T'haeping Dynasty" (1852), translated by W. H. Medhurst.

<sup>8</sup> *Taiping T'ien-kuo Feh Shi*, II, 48.

graded in size in the same manner from the large seal of the Eastern king, 6.6 inches by 3.3 inches, to that of the "vexillary," 2.5 inches by 1.25 inches.

An army organised in this manner was divided into five legions known as the front, rear, left, right, and center legions. Each of these legions was subdivided into five cohorts, also known as front, rear, left, right, and center. The five centuries were numbered from one to five; the four "vexillaries" were known as those of the east, west, south, and north. The five "cinquevirs" were distinguished by the terms "firm," "brave," "courageous," "daring," and "martial." The privates under each cinquevir also bore the felicitous designations: "rush on the foe," "beat the enemy," "obtain the victory," and "report success." On his breast each man bore his full designation, written on a piece of cloth about four inches square. The first man in the army would be "The man who rushes on the foe, [attached to] the firm cinquevir, [belonging to] the eastern vexillary of the first century of the front cohort of the advanced legion." Thus it would run on until the last man would be: "The man who reports success, [attached to] the martial cinquevir, [belonging to] the southern vexillary of the fifth century of the center cohort of the center legion."

The army was first organised in the district of Pingwen in Kwangsi under the yellow flag. But the legions came from different places, the first from Kweishen in Kwangtung, the second from Pingnan, the third from Kweiping, the fourth from Tsengwu, and the fifth from Wuhsuan, all in Kwangsi. Some of the cohorts were filled out elsewhere, one of them not until Taochow was reached in Hunan. No mention is made in the Taiping books of the eight other armies, and it seems improbable that any others had been organised in 1852; and the fact that this

one picked recruits in Hunan implies that even it was not complete. One recent account says that when Yungan was captured the total rebel population was 37,000 and that the effective army was but five thousand and a few hundred.<sup>10</sup> Later, when success brought throngs of recruits to the cause, these soldiers of the first army became the officers for the later armies or entered into various civil offices. Many of them were unable to measure up to the requirements of their new duties, and it is possible, as charged, that their lack of ability coupled with their pride in their suddenly attained dignities had much to do with the deterioration of their armies.<sup>11</sup>

The rules governing the soldiers in camp or on the march were very strict. Followed literally, they would have made the Taiping army a force similar to Cromwell's Ironsides. In addition to the usual requirements of attention, obedience, readiness, and order, the soldiers were enjoined to learn the Ten Commandments, carry on morning and evening worship, abstain from tobacco and wine, and stay far away from the camp of the women. On the march each soldier was to carry his own necessary accouterments, provisions, cooking utensils, oil, and salt. No able-bodied soldier or officer, unless of suitable rank, could ride; nor could he impress menials into his service, either from those within the ranks or from the people outside. No one was permitted to enter villages either to cook or to requisition food, to injure the dwellings or to steal the property of the population. All were forbidden to loot shops or public offices. No one could impede the march by hanging up his lanterns on the roadside or at a shop and going to sleep.<sup>12</sup>

By the time Nanking was captured it was estimated

<sup>10</sup> *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, III, 53 f.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Regulations, etc.*, notes on pages 1, 2, and 3.

that at least five of these principal armies had been organised on the same model as the first, but they could not have been as well drilled and were lacking in military supplies.<sup>13</sup>

There was little uniformity of dress among the privates, not even in the cloth around the head, and there was nothing equivalent to our systematic forming, wheeling and marching in regular bodies; but the strictest discipline is maintained in so far as prompt obedience to orders and signals is concerned. Of guns [cannon] there was abundance, of matchlocks and musquets but few; the arms being chiefly spears, halberds and swords. A few bows were noticed.<sup>14</sup>

All of the females have been quartered in separate buildings where they work and receive rations under the superintendence of the seniors; and while all have been told that this measure is but temporary, to prevent abuses otherwise sure to ensue in the existing confusion, it is for the present certain death for any male to enter these establishments, even as husband or father.<sup>15</sup>

Later armies were organised on the same model. They continued their religious observances even down to the end of the war, though we cannot say whether it was with the same conviction as that which animated the earlier members. Discipline continued to be strict, promotion was granted on the basis of merit; on the whole, the ranks seem to have been filled with an unusually intelligent set of men. To the end they remained deficient

<sup>13</sup> Trip of H. B. M. Plenipotentiary, Sir George Bonham, Bart., to Nanking in the *Hermes*, April 22, 1853. Extracted from the *N. C. Herald*, May 7, 1853, pp. 15 f. That report mistakenly supposes that all five of the original kings were alive at the time, each in command of one of the armies. Two had fallen on the way, though the *Autobiography* of the Chungwang indicates (p. 5) that their titles continued.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19. He goes on to observe that the whole character of relations was better and that the usual "obscenities that garnished the ordinary language of both sexes" were not heard.

in firearms, but in this respect they were about on an equality with their adversaries. In the later period of the war an army was made up of three different kinds of soldiers: first, those who had served for at least six years with the Taipings; second, those who had three years of service to their credit; and third—far more numerous than the others—recent recruits. In each class were three orders, graded according to bravery. Musketeers or cavalrymen were chosen from those who showed the greatest bravery; from the next order the heavy gingall and halberd men; and from the least promising the spearmen. The musketeers were armed with matchlocks and double-barrelled European guns, muskets, and pistols. The same was true of the cavalry. The gingall was carried by four men, who placed it on a tripod when firing. The spears were long bamboo poles with spikes in the end. These varied from eight to eighteen feet in length. Some of the men from the north were armed with Tartar bows and these instruments proved even more effective than the matchlocks.<sup>16</sup>

In battle the spearmen were placed in front, the halberdiers in the second line, while the musketeers and cavalry formed the final or reserve line.<sup>16</sup>

Allusions are frequent in Taiping writings to the female warriors and to the camps of women. The former appear to have disappeared before the end of the war, though instances are not unknown of women who rode forth with their husbands, eager to share their wild life

<sup>16</sup> Lindley, I, 248 ff. In regard to the organisation of the armies this writer should rank as a first-hand source. Though his documents were destroyed and he wrote from memory, he was with the army as late as 1863, or early in 1864, and bore a commission from the Chungwang. On the religious beliefs of the people he is untrustworthy; probably also in comparing Taipingdom with the rest of China. Used with caution he is a good source, but must constantly be watched because of his open bias in favor of the movement.

of adventure and hardship. "In former years they were wont to fight bravely," says Lindley,<sup>17</sup> "and could ably discharge the duties of officers, being however formed into a separate camp and only joining the men in religious observances." Earlier Taiping documents confirm this. In the army regulations for the settled camps the fifth rule says: "Observe the distinction between the camp of the males and that of the females; let no men and women give or take from each others' hands." In the fifth regulation for armies on the march we find another similar reference to "officers or soldiers, male or female," and several passages occur in the same language.<sup>18</sup> A proclamation issued just before the breaking out from Yungan, dated April 5, 1852, enjoins on both male and female officers throughout the host to grasp the sword "with joy and exultation, firmness and patience, courage and ardor, valiantly to fight against the imps."<sup>19</sup>

From the evidence of such passages we are forced to believe that women were trained to bear arms in this rebellion. In the formative days of the movement we are told of "two female rebel chiefs of great valor, named Kew-urh and Szu-san," who came to join Hung's movement. They were stationed with their four thousand warriors at some distance from the others.<sup>20</sup> When Nanking was once gained, the females apparently ended their career as active warriors in the field and were placed in

<sup>17</sup> Lindley, I, 303.

<sup>18</sup> Among these are the T'ienwang's proclamation of March 2, 1852, at Yungan, regarding the seventh commandment. In an earlier proclamation, dated in January, 1851, separation is required between ranks of males and females.

<sup>19</sup> In all Taiping proclamations to the imperialists, "Imps" refer to worshippers of demons.

<sup>20</sup> Hamberg, p. 54. The context does not make it quite clear whether the followers of these women were men or women. The constant allusion to female warriors would lend color to the view that they were a regular Amazon corps.



quarters of their own, where they were rigidly secluded even from the men of their own families. Suitable duties were then assigned to both sexes—the men going forth to do battle, while the female camps were assigned to tasks more befitting their sex, such as the making of clothing, ammunition, banners, and similar necessities of war. It is not quite clear whether these camps included the wives of soldiers or officials on duty in Nanking, though in the later years it appears certain that membership in these camps was confined to the women whose husbands were absent, or to young, unmarried women without homes.<sup>21</sup>

Nor is it at all clear why, contrary to the usual Chinese practice, women were engaged as soldiers. It may be a very early manifestation of the same spirit that led women in the first days of the Chinese Republic (1912) to drill and fight for the new cause, or that led to the employment of Russian women in certain famous battalions during the World War more recently. The adherence of female chiefs who came begging admittance to the new movement lends color to that view. Yet the contrary is implied in the fact that they were no longer thus em-

<sup>21</sup> See Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 7. Also Meadows, p. 173. Lindley, I, 300 ff., states that except among the *wangs* monogamy was the rule, that no divorce save for adultery was permitted, and that women must either be married or a member of a family, or else be placed in an institution for unprotected women. These were presided over by matrons. Young women, those whose husbands were off on public service or those without relatives, were kept in these homes. *Tai ping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi* gives a table of the female officials in the state, showing four with the rank of *dux* or leader of 12,500 persons, and of officers of lower rank, thus indicating the organization of four armies of women. But the author does not indicate whether these continued to exist very long. He also makes mention of forty regiments of 2,500 women soldiers each, or a total of 100,000 female warriors. I feel sure that there is something wrong about this, at least from the point of view of their actually serving with the colors. The nominal organization might have been maintained. Mention is likewise made of 160 women who were superintendents of embroidery with fifty workers in each company, a total of 8,000. *Ibid.*, II, 49 f.

ployed after the "Heavenly Capital" was once secured. This circumstance strengthens the opinion that, with the eventual design of securing the whole empire, Chu early foresaw the necessity of making his conquest more than a fight. Therefore he trained the women and boys to take their part beside the adult male warriors in their pilgrimage to that distant goal.<sup>22</sup>

### *B. Political and Social Institutions.*

The first concern of the Taiping rebels had been to perfect the army which was to win for them their empire. From the earliest conflict with 'fiendish imps' in 1848 until they had settled down in Nanking early in 1853 there was no capital, and only the rudiments of civil government.

Yet as early as December, 1850, if we may credit the confession of Hung Ta-ch'üan, there were at least two boards, that of civil office and that of revenues, presided over by two *wangs*; also a judge advocate.<sup>1</sup> During the following year, by successive steps, this government was formalised, its appointments made more permanent, its regulations more carefully considered. From a mere group of rebels there was emerging the nucleus of an army and a state.

One of the first steps in the process was the designation of the Taiping-wang (T'ienwang) as the active head of the nation. On April 19 Yang Siu-ch'ing, claiming to be under the inspiration of the spirit of God the Father, formally presented Hung as their commander and master. "The heavenly Father addressed the multitude," the record runs, "saying: O my children! do you know

<sup>22</sup> Boys as well as women were in these armies. Meadows, p. 164. Towards the end of the rebellion they were again used, probably owing to a scarcity of man power.

<sup>1</sup> *Confession of Hung Ta-ch'üan*, chapter III, above.

your heavenly Father and celestial elder Brother? To which they all replied, We know our heavenly Father and celestial elder Brother. The heavenly Father then said, Do you know your Lord, and truly? To which they all replied, We know our Lord right well. The heavenly Father said, I have sent your Lord down into the world to become the celestial King; you must not dare to act disorderly, nor to be disrespectful. If you do not regard your Lord and King every one of you will be involved in difficulty."<sup>2</sup>

Prior to this Yang had served as generalissimo; from this date until after the siege of Changsha the decrees were issued by Hung, who was both co-sovereign and active head of the revolution, T'ienteh being the emperor and remaining in the background.<sup>3</sup> This arrangement was in effect till the end of the siege at Changsha, after which all the important proclamations were issued by Yang, the Eastern king, or jointly by him and Hsiao, the Western king, though the latter was actually deceased.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> "Book of Celestial Decrees and Declarations of the Imperial Will," p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> I have before me one proclamation, presumably dated just before the capture of Changsha, in the second year of T'ienteh, commencing "Hung, Captain-General of the army, having entire superintendence of military affairs, and aiding in the advancement of the T'haeping or Great Pacificating Dynasty," etc. (Translated by W. H. M. in *Peking Gazette* for 1853-1856.) I have already alluded to the later tendency to suppress the truth about certain chiefs, such as T'ienteh, and the death of Fêng Yun-shan and Hsiao (Chao-kwei. My inference is that Hung, the celestial King, was at first called the Taiping-wang and was either subordinate to T'ienteh, or at best equal. But at Yungan the dynasty was evidently set up in the name of T'ienteh, who had the ambition later to set up the Later Ming Dynasty. (See the proclamation of Kwoh of Hupeh, p. 4 of *Peking Gazette* for 1853.)

<sup>4</sup> One such proclamation is translated by Medhurst, bearing date March 3, 1853, and is perhaps the first. It subsequently appeared as the first in the books of proclamations brought down by the *Hermes* in May, 1853. At the beginning of June a third copy was obtained, omitting reference to the Triads. See *Pamphlets issued by the Chinese Insurgents*, translated by W. H. Medhurst, Sr., Shanghai, 1853, pp. 33, 34. It is significant that with this

By November, 1851, the tentative arrangements were replaced by more permanent arrangements. Under the two chief rulers five kings were appointed: Yang Siu-ch'ing, the Eastern king, chief minister of state and generalissimo, with control of all regions to the east; Hsiao Chao-kwei, the Western king, second minister of state and assistant generalissimo, with control of all regions to the west; Fêng Yun-shan, the Southern king and general of the advanced guard, having charge of all regions to the south; Wei Chang, the Northern king and general of the rear guard, having charge of all the regions lying to the north; and Shi Ta-k'ai, the Assistant king, appointed to aid in sustaining the celestial court.<sup>4</sup>

The organisation was almost purely military, and a form of state socialism prevailed in the ideals of the founders. All property was to be held in common; when the tendency to secrete gold and silver appeared, severe penalties were imposed. This type of organisation was perpetuated in Nanking, which remained to the end a military rather than a civil capital. From the public treasury soldiers, officials, and the families of those absent on public duties received their support.<sup>5</sup> On every Sabbath day the officials had to make up their list of requirements and present it to the official in charge of the stores, who would thereupon issue them to the proper persons. To each vexillary a weekly allowance of a hundred cash was made, and half that amount was granted the privates. Each group of twenty-five received an allowance of two hundred *catties* of rice, seven of oil, and seven of salt.<sup>6</sup>

evidence of suppression we also notice an omission of the proclamation of Hung, alluded to on the last page.

<sup>4</sup> Proclamations of Nov. 30, 1851. *Pamphlets issued by the Chinese Insurgents*, Book of Celestial Decrees, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11, and see a proclamation from Changsha rebuking those who failed to live up to this ideal and threatening the death penalty for infraction of the command, pp. 16, 17. *Tai ping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, IX, 8 f.

There was also an allowance for buying other food, but this appears to have been according to the will of the chief. An allowance for worship was also given.<sup>7</sup>

We cannot trace in detail from this time on the various steps in the evolution of the civil government. When the process was completed an elaborate list of officials existed, at least on paper, graded and assimilated in rank to those of the military service.<sup>8</sup> As one would expect, the major portion of the great list of officials was attached to the court at Nanking or to the minor courts of the various *wangs*, but there were some who, in theory, were civil officials in the districts into which the Taipings expected to organise the country when they actually controlled it; on the whole, few of these actually functioned, because the boundaries of their state were not well established at any time, and, with the notable exception of a few cities which they held at the point of the sword, they did not long remain in control of any place.

In the capital, which they had renamed T'ienking or Celestial Capital, they placed all things under the control of the Eastern king until his assassination in 1856. Eventually six boards were established, modelled on those at Peking, with a separate department of foreign affairs. There was no difficulty about this, because these six boards did not originate with the Manchus but were found in the earlier dynasties. At first the five kings were placed over these boards, but later these kings became a privy council to the T'ienwang, presiding over the military departments, and the boards passed under

<sup>7</sup> *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, IX, 9. An interesting feature noted by observers in Nanking was the absence of shops inside the walls. Neither was there a civil population. All were compelled either to enlist in the army or government service, or to leave with the little property he could carry in his hands. Brine, pp. 194 f. Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, II, gives lists of all the officials.

the control of the *Ch'eng-hsiang* or ministers of state who stood immediately below the nobility in rank.<sup>9</sup>

It is not quite clear what the original intention was regarding the creation of so many *wangs* or kings, whether they were intended to be semi-independent feudal chieftains, like those of the Chow Dynasty whose territories surrounded the imperial demesne, or something else. If the T'ienwang did have in mind the pre-Confucian idea of government, as he did of army arrangements, we should say that he aimed at a highly decentralised nation. We have seen above that T'ienteh criticised this organisation, for he must have foreseen its inevitable consequences to the integrity of the state. If there was any such intention—indeed if there was any intention at all besides holding together six mutually jealous and ambitious men—it never came to anything, because, to the very end, the government remained essentially military.

Of the five kings two, and they the most gifted, fell on the way to Nanking. Their loss was irreparable, because they were apparently the only ones who were able in any measure to check the pretensions of Yang. The latter, now promoted to be sole executive, quickly became so cruel and arrogant that he earned the implacable hatred of the Northern and Assistant kings. By the reproofs he administered to Hung himself in God's name, by his forcing a recognition of his claim to be the Holy Ghost, third in the Trinity, as well as by other usurpations, he at last

<sup>9</sup> Lindley, I, 153 f. In the boards the following arrangements were first made:

Yang Siu-ch'ing,	Eastern King,	Prime Minister.
Wei Chang-hui,	Northern King,	President of the Board of War.
Fêng Yun-shan,	Southern King,	President of the Boards of Justice and Finance.
Hsiao Ch'ao-kwei,	Western King,	President of the Board of Civil Office, Ecclesiastical matters.
Shi Ta-k'ai,	Assistant King,	President of the Board of Public Affairs and Foreign Office.

aroused the sluggish spirit of the T'ienwang, who, with the help of the two kings named above, assassinated him in 1856. But the troubles of the T'ienwang had not ended, for Wei the Northern king, aspired to the place next to the T'ienwang, and his orgies of cruelty, which extended to the slaughter of the family of the Assistant king, brought about his assassination by the combined efforts of all who had suffered from his cruelties in Nanking; and the permanent alienation of Shi Ta-k'ai, who, with his band of followers, set forth to be a knight errant, passing through Kiangsi, Hunan, Kwangsi, and eventually into Yunnan and Ssuch'uan, where he was finally captured,—the Cœur de Lion of the era.<sup>10</sup>

The five original *wangs* were practically all dead or out of favor by 1858, and Hung kept the title for members of his own family, honoring his two brothers with the title of kings and relying more and more on their support and advice.

After the murder of the Eastern and Northern Kings, the T'ienwang virtually ceased to create any more princes, and the fact of his having altered his intentions and made so many Wangs at the present day, is entirely owing to the arrival of his brother Hung Jen-kan in the 9th year [1859]. He was so exceedingly delighted to see his brother that, before a fortnight had passed by, he made him Generalissimo and accompanied this honor with a decree that all men should be under the new officer's control. Seeing, however, that the new Generalissimo was very incompetent, and had not a single suggestion to offer, he again thought over the matter to himself, and knowing that several of his fighting ministers, who had won much merit and done much to support the nation, were displeased, he discovered that he had made a great mistake. He knew also that Ch'enYu-

<sup>10</sup> After the death of the Northern king, he returned to the capital for a time, but the T'ienwang became jealous of him and relied on his own brothers. Therefore the able Shi Ta-k'ai left the Celestial Court never to return. Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 8.

ch'eng and myself [Li Siu-ch'en, later the Chungwang], the two head chiefs, were engaged in daily exertions on his behalf, and that he had erred greatly in putting one of so little ability into a high post, one who in two months had shown himself of no value whilst he had neglected to do anything for us. He first made Ch'en Yu-ch'eng the Ying-wang [Heroic King], and, as I had made strenuous exertion all along, he concluded not to forget me, and followed up this by making me a Wang.<sup>11</sup>

The precedent having thus been broken, the T'ienwang had to allay the clamors of others who had rendered service, by elevating more persons to the honor, and when some of these were men who had served for but a short time, those who had borne the burden for a long time naturally claimed the same reward. Then the Board of Proclamations yielded to the pressure of bribery and recommended more and more those who coveted the honor enough to pay for it. "The lazy and useless were all made princes and the officers outside, who were exerting themselves daily, were much displeased and refused to fight. Those of ability and talent were thrown aside, the T'ienwang preferring to form the pillars of his dynasty with the indolent and useless." Then he had to resort to making distinctions among the different *wangs*, and this but added to the confusion by alienating the really able men. By the end of the war there were said to have been as many as 2,700 of these *wangs* in several grades, practically all of them being regarded simply as officials with titles of honor, not more than three or four of them possessing any special ability. There is some indication that they came to form a kind of parliament, sanction of which had to be obtained for the more important affairs of state, such as military expeditions or plans of defence.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>12</sup> But Lindley states that the T'ienwang had the final decision. The Chungwang gives the impression that while the T'ienwang did have the



Below the ranks of kings stood the dukes, of whom the titles of but thirteen are known. In the days when the title of "king" had practically lapsed, the T'ienwang established five grades of nobility ranking below the dukes but almost on an equality with them. These bore the curious titles of "Celestial Pleasure," "Celestial Rest," "Celestial Happiness," "Celestial Tranquillity," and "Celestial Righteousness." The total number receiving these titles of nobility was but fourteen, and after the *wangs* became so common there was little reason for creating any of these lower nobles. Indeed, there is some indication that the titles were unpopular and brought the Taipings into ridicule when they came in contact with their enemies.<sup>13</sup>

The limits of the Taiping state were never fixed, consequently the boards could not settle down to the peaceful administration of the country. But where they had control officers were required. The more capable of the "older brethren" were promoted to the higher positions and sent forth to administer the portion of the country which came under their control. For administrative purposes the territory they held outside of Nanking was divided into districts of 12,500 families, which were subdivided almost exactly as in the army until the 'neighborhood' of five families was reached. The chief unit was apparently the hamlet of twenty-five families, presided over by an officer called "Ssu-ma of the Hamlet," and the officials above them all bore the same titles as the army officers. The highest territorial division was the *chun* which apparently corresponded to the prefecture under

authority he leaned too much on his relatives, especially Hung Jen-kan (Hung Jin), who was particularly hated by the Chungwang.

<sup>13</sup> Tsêng Kuo-fan, in a letter July 19, 1861, expresses a desire to destroy "the religion of the Heavenly Father and Heavenly brother, and the officials 'Celestial Rest' and 'Celestial Pleasure.'"

the Manchus. Below it was the *chow* and *hsien*, and under that the divisions of 12,500 families. Each *chow* or *hsien* would therefore have from two to three of these districts, each of them responsible for the maintenance of one army, and each family for one soldier. The raising of taxes and contributions, and the oversight of community worship and education fell to the lot of the "Ssu-ma of the Hamlet." He had to see that the children (and the adults in newly conquered regions) learned the Ten Commandments. Each of these small hamlets was to be supplied with the necessary artisans to make it an economic unit—potters, blacksmiths, carpenters, and masons.<sup>14</sup>

The system described above closely resembles that in effect during the Chow Dynasty, and, as in the case of the army, appears to have been derived from that ancient period. If so, we may consider that the sovereign regarded himself as the owner of the soil and allotted it according to the needs of the people, who, in turn, were obliged to render to him, through the efforts of the "Ssu-ma," the twenty-five soldiers levied on them and the required taxes of grain and other produce for their support.

Although this system did not prevail in its completed form, and civil government never came to supersede the military system, those departments which supplied the army and the families of soldiers were thoroughly and efficiently organised. The commissariat and the bureaus for providing supplies were carefully divided among many officers, each responsible for furnishing one thing, grain, salt, oil, cannon, gunpowder, cannon-balls, saltpeter, iron, banners, or flags.<sup>15</sup> The lists of officials in-

<sup>14</sup> Lindley, I, 217-219, taken from the "Regulations of the Celestial Dynasty" issued in 1857. Also Brine, pp. 210-212; *Tai ping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, II, 26.

<sup>15</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, supplementary volume, III, 3a.

clude those engaged in nearly every form of occupation, such as public printers, watchmen, foremen, physicians and druggists, superintendents in trade, and cooks in public institutions. To give official rank to many of these shows us that the statements made elsewhere about the socialistic-military type of government, prevailing at the Taiping capital and in some of the chief cities, are based on the actual organisation of their state.<sup>16</sup>

It was apparently the intention of the T'ienwang to organise the country on the basis of definite holdings of land graded according to its yield into nine classes, and distributed among the peasants according to their needs.<sup>17</sup> That this provision was ever carried into effect is doubtful. It was found necessary throughout the long struggle to insure supplies to the great armies constantly in the field and especially to their families and the officials at Nanking. No chances could be taken of losing the co-operation of agriculturists. Within the areas well under control we therefore find the village and rural population subject to taxation indeed, but less burdened than under Manchu rule, while on the other hand their products were purchased at fair prices and not taken from them forcibly.<sup>18</sup> Apart from strictly enforcing the religious and moral precepts of their faith, overturning the idols and temples, and forbidding the use of opium and alcohol,<sup>19</sup> the insurgents did all they could to encourage agriculture<sup>20</sup> and trade. The statistics for these years show that the export of tea actually increased under the Taipings from 1858 to 1862,<sup>21</sup> while silk practically held its own.

<sup>16</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, supplementary volume, III, 3a.

<sup>17</sup> Lindley, I, 218 f.

<sup>18</sup> Meadows, p. 291.

<sup>19</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, supplementary volume, IV, 4, also II, 11a.

<sup>20</sup> Meadows, p. 291.

<sup>21</sup> Sykes, *The Taiping Rebellion in China*, appendix, p. 178.

Internal transit duties were not collected and the trade must have moved with unusual freedom.<sup>22</sup>

The matter which chiefly engaged the government, after its physical needs were met, was the promulgation of religion. Each officer and official, from the T'ienwang himself down to the "vexillaries" (Ssu-ma) in army or hamlet, had to be alert to instruct the people in the new faith, compelling them to learn the Ten Commandments and the stated prayers together with the doxology. We have already recorded the Sabbath services of these people, which were always led by officers—if possible by one of the older adherents of the movement. Sources both friendly and hostile join in stating that these observances were carried out with regularity.<sup>23</sup>

The position of women has been referred to in other connections, their participation as soldiers and, after Nanking was gained, their position in the various institutions provided for their care. Marriage was compulsory for all classes of women, high and low alike. Contrary to the ordinary Chinese custom, whereby great honor is conferred on virtuous widows who refuse to remarry, these were required to accept a new husband. From the connection of their religion with the Bible and their ferocious laws against immorality they would be expected to enforce strict monogamy, but this was far from true. Hung Ta-ch'üan's statement<sup>24</sup> that Hung kept an extensive harem is more than confirmed by the statement of

<sup>22</sup> Lindley, p. 145, in a letter from Lo Ta-kang to Sir George Bonham, 1853. See also Yung Wing, *My Life in China and America*, for an account of his visit to the tea regions under control of the Taiping rebels.

<sup>23</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, supplementary volume, II, 10, 11a. Lindley, I, 217 ff., gives the regulations of 1857. By this time the doxology appears to have been revised, leaving out the references to the Eastern king and the other *wangs*. The first-named work states that on every possible occasion there was a sermon glorifying God's work in creation and that of the two highest kings, Hung and Yang, in sustaining the people.

<sup>24</sup> See chapter III.

the second T'ienwang, Hung Fu-t'ien, captured after the fall of Nanking, who says: "I am sixteen years old and am the son of the second wife (named Lai) of the T'ienwang's 88 wives. At the age of nine I had four wives given to me. . . ." The law of strict seclusion of women was evidently not intended to prevent polygamy, at least among the higher ranks. On the whole the impression is given that women were somewhat less repressed under them than under the regular régime; among other things foot-binding was abandoned.

One of the first acts of the new government in Nanking was to provide for a system of examinations based on the ancient models, for recruiting officials both civil and military. Regulations were drawn up and at least some examinations held. The classics having been discarded, together with all books of the Manchu era, they substituted themes from the Bible and the Taiping writings. In the first examination the subject prescribed for the essay was "The Heavenly Father on the seventh day had finished creating the mountains and seas." For the poem the following couplet was the theme:

The T'ienwang and the Tungwang with anxious hearts have labored;

In tranquillity sustaining the people of the world. How sublime their virtue!<sup>25</sup>

From this creditable side of their activities it is not so easy to turn to the subject of their cruelty. If they were intent upon order and good morals in their ranks, they were stern enough to believe that their reforms could be accomplished only by terrible penalties. Death was prescribed for a large number of crimes and offences—beheading for less serious cases, while for those of a more heinous character beheading and throwing away the

<sup>25</sup> *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, VIII.

head or exposing the head, constituted the penalty. Two fearful punishments were reserved for treason, adultery, or other black offences: tearing the body to pieces by attaching head, arms, and legs to five separate horses and lashing them to make them pull in different directions, and lighting the "Celestial lamp." In the last-named punishment the hapless victim was soaked or wrapped in inflammable materials, such as oil, and burned to death. This was not, perhaps, more cruel than the *ling chih* process of slicing a person to pieces, which the imperialists used in extreme cases, but it made the shudders run down the spine of those who told of them. Death was the punishment for crimes ranging from treason to the singing of wanton songs and absence from divine worship.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, VII.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE EMERGENCE OF TSÊNG KUO-FAN AND ORGANISATION OF A NEW FORCE

THE Tsêng family, from which the hero of the Taiping Rebellion sprang, is one of the half-dozen great families of China, for it had its origin in the philosopher Tsêng, who was one of the greatest disciples of Confucius. During the seventy generations which lay between Kuo-fan and his illustrious ancestor, his own immediate forbears had become farmers in the district of Siangsiang, Hunan, about sixty miles from Changsha. His family were in very poor circumstances financially, but their proud lineage entitled them to rank among the gentry of their countryside, and they aspired to continue the scholarly traditions of their ancestors by studying the classics in order to secure enrollment in the aristocracy of letters. Tsêng's grandfather was a practical man of affairs with a mind fixed on realities; his influence was powerful in the formation of the boy's character. His father was inclined to study, but without early success. He only secured the coveted B.A. degree in the year in which it was awarded to his eldest son—not an unusual occurrence, perhaps, and one that goes to show how great was the desire on the part of the Chinese for a literary degree.

Amid happy dreams and lucky omens Tsêng Kuo-fan was born in this poor country home on November 26, 1811. At the age of four he was set to work on his studies. Before his eighth birthday he had already studied the

five classics and was commencing to write compositions. Five years later, in accordance with Chinese custom, he was betrothed to a young girl named Ouyang, to whom he was married as soon as he was old enough.<sup>1</sup>

In 1826 he took his first examination and stood seventh on the list.<sup>2</sup> But it was not until 1832 that he appeared to compete for the B.A. degree, which he failed to secure at the first attempt, though he stood on the list of honor.<sup>3</sup> In 1833 he was successful and secured the degree at the same time that his father, after seventeen failures, also passed. The following year he went to Changsha for the M.A. examination, in which he was also successful, standing thirty-sixth on the list. The same year he went to Peking to try his luck in the national examinations for the doctorate, but in two examinations he failed. In some manner he found the means to travel extensively during the year 1836 in Kiangnan and Chekiang. Though his position as an M.A. gave him some prestige in the community, he was still not satisfied. It is related of him that while on this journey he discovered a set of valuable books, and borrowed a hundred *taels* with which to purchase them. With these books in his possession he repaired to his countryside, where he gave himself to a year of intense application in preparation for the third attempt.

At the beginning of 1838 he was ready once again to go to Peking, equipped as he now was with an additional year's preparation. No money was available for him, but

<sup>1</sup> The chief source for these earlier years is the *Nienp'u*, or "Annals" of Tseng Wen-chen, containing material taken from family records and his own writings.

<sup>2</sup> This was a sort of matriculation examination. Those who succeeded might compete later for the B.A. degree.

<sup>3</sup> This was not to belittle his scholarship, because the number of men entitled to receive the degree was fixed by the emperor for each province and district. A place on the roll of honor carried some prestige.



he was able to borrow thirty-two strings of cash for the journey, of which he spent all but three on the way to the capital.<sup>4</sup> In those days this was a long trip, requiring about a month of slow progress by boat and chair. The usual amount reckoned as necessary for expenses was about forty *taels*. Successful at last in the great examination,<sup>5</sup> he was shortly afterwards passed in the supreme test of Chinese scholarship and admitted into the Hanlin Academy on the twenty-third of June."

Attainment of these honors conveyed the privilege of office, so he was now a part of the imperial service. Examinations were not yet over, however, for there were several grades in the Hanlin Academy. Kuo-fan therefore, after a short visit to his home, gave himself diligently to his new tasks, advancing rapidly from step to step, meanwhile receiving appointments to minor positions in the capital. His letters for the period show us a singularly attractive life among men of literary inclinations—colleagues in the Hanlin Academy—with disputations and friendly competitions in writing essays and poetry. His income was small and he constantly lived beyond it, though we have no details except that in 1842 his house rent cost fifteen strings of cash a month. Whatever he received he shared generously with his family or with needy Hunanese in Peking. His application to his studies was incessant, for he had plenty of leisure, and

<sup>4</sup> A string is 1,000 cash, the equivalent in theory of a *tael* of silver, but with a purchasing power greatly in excess of today's.

<sup>5</sup> The doctorate was highly prized. The family from which a doctor came usually hung up a red sign above the door with the two large characters "Tsin Shih." Even today one sometimes sees above some humble country house these evidences of distinction, and it is easy to imagine the thrill of pride that greeted the news of Kuo-fan's success when it reached his family.

<sup>6</sup> This corresponds in the main to membership in the national academy in European countries, except that membership in China is gained through public competitive examination instead of election.

thereby he was able successively to rise in rank until we read of a special examination in 1843 at the Yüan Ming Yüan palace in the presence of the emperor himself, where out of one hundred and twenty-three members of the academy, Tsêng was ranked in the sixth place, at the head of the second group. This gave him the chance to enter into a high office in the academy. In his letters home he tells his parents that he is the third Hunanese to achieve this honor during the Ch'ing Dynasty.<sup>7</sup>

In the same year he was sent to Ssuch'uan as examiner, and during that year and the following received honorary titles and duties in the palace. None of these flattering promotions brought him much financial advantage, and even the thousand *taels* which he received as an honorarium for the examinership at Ch'engtu was spent to aid poor relatives. His annual expenses amounted, in the year 1842, to about six hundred *taels*, and were probably about the same in the other years.<sup>8</sup> In Ssuch'uan Tsêng found the social side of his task most irksome. In addition to the duties that fell to him as an examiner he complains that he had to do too much entertaining; that he was called on to write scrolls on which he inscribed flattering comparisons between Hunan and Ssuch'uan; that many came to borrow money, and whether they sought or received much or little or none, there was endless palaver; and that endless calls were to be made and received.<sup>9</sup> Long before this Tsêng had complained of the irksomeness of social intercourse at Peking, where he was comparatively free from the need of doing more than he cared to, and had resolved only to seek friendship with those who could help him correct his faults and go forward to a better life, not to call on men of rank simply to gain a favorable reputation.<sup>10</sup> Therefore the inescapable

<sup>7</sup> *Home Letters*, April 22, 1843.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, June 27, 1844.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, January 20, 1843.

<sup>10</sup> *Home Letters*, March 31, 1842.

social strain at Ch'engtu was doubly trying, especially because of the heat and his own indisposition.

In 1847 Tsêng took the final examination that brought him the promotion to cabinet rank. No other Hunanese had gained that place at the age of thirty-seven since the Ch'ing Dynasty came to power, and of late years only two others of any province had gone up from the doctorate to the cabinet within ten years.<sup>11</sup> He was appointed a vice president in the Board of Rites.<sup>12</sup> The ceremonies in connection with the death of the empress in 1849, followed by that of the emperor the following year, kept Tsêng, as a member of that board, well occupied. In the awards distributed as a result of these occurrences, Tsêng's family for three generations shared in the honors that were granted him.

From the Board of Rites he was transferred to one board after the other until he had served as a vice president in each of the six. In 1852, after the rebels had made their escape from Yungan and news of the disaster reached Peking,<sup>13</sup> it fell to his lot to deliberate with others in the Board of Punishments as to what should be done with Wulant'ai and Saishanga, who were held responsible for the disaster to imperial arms. Feeling that military matters were of the gravest concern, Tsêng urged that the severest penalties be inflicted, but the emperor overruled the decision of the board. Perhaps the emperor was on safer ground at a time like this when good generals were so scarce, but the incident enables us to understand something of the stern spirit of the man who was

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, July 29, 1847.

<sup>12</sup> Each of the boards had two presidents, a Chinese and a Manchu, and four vice presidents. This was a very high place for so young a man in China.

<sup>13</sup> The defeat was April 6 and 7. The news reached Peking April 29, *Nienp'u*, I, 30b.

destined eventually to reorganise the military forces and suppress the rebellion.<sup>14</sup>

For several years Tsêng had wished to get home for a visit, but his poverty and the loss of opportunity to win promotion had prevented him from doing so. True, he had had visits from some of the members of the family, and for some time Kuo-ch'üan had lived with him in Peking, but he had a great desire to be in the quiet countryside with his relatives and old friends. The opportunity came when, in July, 1852, he received appointment as examiner in Kiangsi, and secured a sixty days' leave of absence to make the visit to his home. While he was on the road from Peking to Kiangsi, the news met him that his mother had died on the twenty-eighth of July. Inexorable custom demanded that he give up the appointment and retire at once for a period of mourning; Tsêng therefore started at once for Hunan with the intention of remaining at home twenty-seven months.<sup>15</sup>

At Wuchang (September 26) he learned that Changsha was undergoing the long siege from the Taiping rebels. He therefore avoided that city, leaving the river at Siangyin and passing through Ninghsiang. On October 6 he was at home. His mother was buried on the twenty-fifth of that month. Tsêng remained at home until the rebels had left Changsha and were far down the river on the way to Nanking.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Nienp'u*, I, 30b.

<sup>15</sup> *Nienp'u*, I, 31b. Theoretically the period of mourning for parents was three years, but actually twenty-seven months were observed. This was considered important enough to justify a high official leaving his post, though sometimes, under circumstances of great stress the emperor might order the period shortened.

<sup>16</sup> Pott, *A Sketch of Chinese History*, states that Tsêng Kuo-fan was governor of Hunan and that through his defence of the city it was not captured, forgetting that under the Manchu dynasty no man could serve as governor in his home province and that Tsêng was not in Changsha at all.

It will be recalled that the only victories thus far won against the insurgents had been by Kiang Chung-yuan with his small company of country militia. One must not fail, either, to give credit to the now discredited and cashiered Saishanga for first recognising the need of this type of warriors and for employing thirty thousand of them in Kwangsi. During the siege of Changsha, Kiang and his two thousand had proved far more useful than any other equal number of men.<sup>17</sup> The Taiping rebels were no sooner departed than local bandits arose everywhere and the governor was at his wits' ends to cope with them. In addition to the two thousand followers of Kiang Chung-yuan, another thousand or more were organised under Lo Tse-nan and Wang Hsin. The desirability of these militia for putting down local bandits became apparent when Kiang promptly suppressed an uprising of that character in Paoking.<sup>18</sup> Tsêng himself was impressed with the value of these village companies of volunteer militia, which he believed ought to suffice for keeping order in the country places, though he was not so sure that they would do against those who had been infected with the poison of the Taiping principles and had thrown off the teachings of Confucius.<sup>19</sup>

About the end of the year the governor received a mandate from Peking informing him that Tsêng Kuo-fan was in retirement in Siangsiang and ordering him to transmit the emperor's command that Tsêng should give his time to the recruiting and drilling of Hunan troops from among the village volunteers throughout the prov-

<sup>17</sup> See chapter IV.

<sup>18</sup> His force was called the *T'su Yung*, while those of Lo Tse-nan were called *Siang Yung*, alternative designations of the province of Hunan, though the character "T'su" might with equal propriety be used of Hupeh.

<sup>19</sup> *Nienp'u*, I, 33a. In spite of the high position Tsêng occupied at Peking, he was now in his retirement only a private citizen. Communications must pass through the governor.

ince.<sup>20</sup> At first this mandate, which reached Tsêng about the twenty-second of January, did not meet Tsêng's wishes. He considered that he ought to complete his mourning, but even if under the pressure of public danger he should undertake the task and the point regarding the mourning should be waived, there was still the great difficulty of attempting what was certain to meet with much opposition on the part of the gentry on whom he would have to call for aid. He foresaw two parts of success with eight parts of trouble.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless he was open to persuasion and some of his influential friends went to his home and begged him to consent. The fall of Wuchang and the consequent unrest everywhere proved very strong arguments, and Tsêng set out from home on the twenty-sixth of January for a conference with the governor. It was his idea to use the new army first against local bandits and afterwards against the Taiping rebels.<sup>22</sup>

He threw himself at once into the task which now had the aspect of an imperative duty. On the thirty-first of January he submitted his plan for transmission to Peking. Seeing that Hunan was threatened by rebels and that the soldiery available for its defence was weak, he proposed setting up a great camp at Changsha, with recruiting agencies in all the districts. Those who had already undergone some training as militia in the country were to be enrolled, sent to Changsha for adequate training, and then employed for a time in various parts of Hunan against the robber bands. In the same document he renewed his request for permission to return to the country to complete his period of mourning.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Nienp'u*, I, 33b.

<sup>21</sup> Letters of different dates, January 24-30, 1853.

<sup>22</sup> Letter of February 4, 1853.

<sup>23</sup> This request was simply *pro forma*, a demand of Chinese etiquette.

Lo Tse-nan now led three *ying*<sup>24</sup> of his braves to Changsha, and they formed the nucleus of Tsêng's new army, which is henceforth known in Chinese history as the Siang Chun, or Hunan Army. Tsêng drew up an elaborate set of regulations for their observance, strict rules indeed, since Tsêng was thoroughly alive to the necessity of careful discipline in his armies, lest they become as useless as those of the regular establishment. Kiang Chung-yuan's *T'su Yung* were more than ever a source of inspiration to him, for at this precise time a band of ten thousand rebels under the leadership of a certain Chow Kuo-yu raised their standard in Liuyang, but were utterly defeated by Kiang in a single battle.

Opportunity soon came to try the mettle of Tsêng's new recruits. Word reached Changsha on March 1 that rebels were collecting in Leiyang and Changning, and threatening Kiaho as well. Eight hundred recruits of both the *T'su* and *Siang* armies were sent against them, who, at Hengshan-hsien, inflicted defeat on them easily.<sup>25</sup>

Opposition was to be expected from the regular military officials to this new venture, and civil officials who had to help bear the expense of its maintenance could scarcely give more than lukewarm support. But the value of such an army was so apparent at Peking that the viceroy and governor both received mandates to further this new enterprise by establishing recruiting stations and securing funds for maintenance, this mandate reaching Changsha on March 12.

But it was from another direction that Tsêng's most serious problem arose. In the wake of the Taiping rebels bandits were rising here and there, and the people of the country districts looked with hostile eyes on the re-

<sup>24</sup> A *ying* in the new army was five hundred men, and I assume that number here.

<sup>25</sup> *Nienp'u*, II, 16.

recruiting of hundreds and even thousands of their volunteers for service outside the province at a time when they were so needed at home to protect their own villages from marauders. These bandits were moving unchecked over the country and until they were suppressed it would be difficult to persuade the men or the officials to leave Hunan thus unguarded.

In still another quarter Tsêng felt pressure, for the imperial government was urgently calling for haste in drilling and sending out these men to meet the Taipings, who were by this time a national danger. Tsêng could not disregard either this or the local feeling; yet he sought to find a way in which to meet the well-founded desires of both sides. In a memorial of March 24, he laid before the emperor the wisdom and necessity of first destroying the bandits in Hunan. In addition to those calling themselves "T'ien Ti Hui," who had for the most part joined the Taipings<sup>26</sup> or represented their cause in Hunan, there were many other brotherhoods with curious names, such as "United Sons," "Red and Black," "Half-penny," "One Sniff of Perfume." Such societies gradually formed themselves into large bands which entered the hilly regions to become dangerous outlaws, particularly in the southeastern and southwestern parts of the province. The authorities, though perfectly aware of their existence, dared not put them down, since they had been allowed to flourish unchecked so long that they were too formidable. They differed somewhat in their purposes, some having religion, others fraternal obligations, and still others robbery as their motive.

These dangerous societies had recently been suppl-

<sup>26</sup> "Add Brothers Society." This is explained by the Chinese as being a different way of expressing T'ien Ti Hui, Heaven and Earth Society, which was a designation of the Triads. My opinion is that Chu was a member of this society, probably of the real Heaven and Earth Society.



mented by another sinister throng, the great numbers of deserting soldiers who had turned vagabond, since they were without funds to return to their homes and without camps where they might reënlist. And of course the perennial source of vagabondage, poverty, had swelled the number of wanderers during the recent upheaval. The ideal way to deal with these various disturbing groups would be to go with the entire force to each district, remaining there until it had been reduced to order, and moving on to the next. In this way a tranquillised Hunan could be left behind. Under the circumstances he was dealing with the problem by setting up a court for examining and awarding the necessary punishments to them according to the gravity of the offence committed by such bandits as were captured. The comment of the emperor in reply to this memorial was to recognise the need for dealing thoroughly with local bandits until they were exterminated.<sup>27</sup> Tsêng's court did actually bring to justice a large number of these offenders, in addition to those visited with punishment in the out-districts affected.

Meanwhile, as will be recalled, Kiang Chung-yuan had been sent with his force down the river and had gone to Nanchang to help drive out the Taipings from that back door to Hunan.<sup>28</sup> He took occasion on the way to write to Tsêng, insisting that in his opinion there was but one certain way of defeating the rebels, namely, by uniting the provinces of Kiangsi, Hupeh, Hunan, and Anhui in the task of building hundreds of boats to be manned by several thousand men from Kwangtung and Fukien. After these had succeeded in pacifying the Yangtse River regions, Nanking could be attacked, together with Yangchow and Chinkiang, and the rebellion quickly put down. This was good advice, for had there been an adequate

<sup>27</sup> *Dispatches*, II, 6, 7a.

<sup>28</sup> See chapter IV.

naval force on the river the rebels would never have been able to reach Nanking. Moreover, they were making use of the waterways at that very moment with practically no opposition. Yet for the moment the advice was received somewhat coldly on Tsêng's part, because it would result in much delay where haste seemed necessary.<sup>29</sup>

Nevertheless he carefully weighed the suggestion. To adopt it would bring about an embarrassing delay, but if it would make the expedition stronger there was no reason why he should not delay, for a premature start would result in nothing save disaster. Moreover, time was necessary to get the land forces ready and to clear Hunan of rebels and bandits. The delay involved in providing the flotilla ought not to be very great. Other letters from Kiang, after he had seen the power of the rebels, urged Tsêng not to forget that no permanent advantage could be gained over the rebels so long as they were free to come and go on the rivers. The flotilla was necessary.<sup>30</sup>

The first suggestion made was that large war junks should be sent by sea from Kwangtung to the Yangtse River, there to be joined by the smaller *k'wai-hai* and *t'o-ku* vessels which, from the inner waters of the same province, could be brought from Wuchow, carried across the short land portage, and floated down the Siang River. Tsêng and the governor jointly requested this of the emperor.<sup>31</sup>

Before a reply could come trouble had arisen, as was almost inevitable, between the new militia and the regulars. On August 17 the Siang army and the *t'ituh's* command came to blows. Tsêng in person reproved the

<sup>29</sup> *Hatsuzoku Ban Shi*, p. 23.

<sup>30</sup> *Nienp'u*, II, 6b. Tsêng in a letter to his father said that while the 'braves' had thus far given a good account of themselves, he would require about 10,000 of them in one compact army, all fired with military ardor.

<sup>31</sup> *Nienp'u*, II, 6b, 7a.

militia, but on the sixth of September a second riot broke out between these two groups, which Tsêng asked the general to settle by martial law. This was not done, and two nights later the regulars of the offending division set out to attack T'a Chi-pu, who had command of a portion of Tsêng's men, and who barely got away with his life by hiding in the grass behind his house. Having burned the house, this lawless company set out to attack Tsêng Kuo-fan himself. The governor, hearing of the uproar, went on foot to the scene and persuaded the soldiers to desist from their purpose.<sup>32</sup>

Long before this occurrence Tsêng had thought that it might be well to drill his own forces in different places, and this untoward incident led him to carry out the idea. He moved his headquarters to Hengchow and distributed his new soldiers among the various towns along the eastern and southern borders of Hunan to suppress bandits and guard against a possible invasion of Taiping rebels from Kiangsi.<sup>33</sup>

In his memorial of the fifteenth of September Tsêng explains his move, giving as his reasons the depredations of the local rebels, which compelled him to distribute his forces for effective police duty, and the desirability of his being closer to the different scenes of trouble than was possible at Changsha. There were four roads by which rebels might enter the province from Kiangsi—one through P'ingkiang, which connected with the strategic city of northwestern Kiangsi named Ining; a second through Ch'aling, and Yu-hsien, leading to Kian; a central road to Shuichow, passing through Liuyang, and a fourth way to Yuanchow and P'inghsiang through Liling. He had sent no troops to P'ingkiang, because that road was somewhat roundabout, but was guarding the

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 7a b.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 7b.

others as well as he could with his small force,<sup>34</sup> and all these things could be managed better from Hengchow. Magnanimously, or his detractors might say prudently, he refrained in his memorial from condemning the regulars or their officers, nor did he mention the attacks made by them.

The rapid spread of the Taiping movement at that time, northward and up the river to Kiangsi and Hupeh, caused the emperor to send mandate after mandate, urging haste in setting out. After receiving several of these, Tsêng drafted a lengthy reply in which he pointed out that he was attempting to create a flotilla. A few vessels had come from Kwangtung, and with these as models, Hengchow builders were trying to make boats capable of carrying cannon weighing a thousand catties.<sup>35</sup> The emperor's reply was practically a reproof, and urged Tsêng to make greater haste because of the peril threatening their cause, particularly since the rebels were overrunning Anhui and ascending the river.

As a result of this impatience in Peking Tsêng again patiently drafted a lengthy memorial, in which he laid bare the great difficulties which prevented his speeding up the work. His defence contains five points. First, owing to the blockade of the road to Kwangtung by bandits at Yunghsing and other places, only eighty-three cannon had arrived. In addition, the building of the required number of new boats and the necessary repairs to the old ones would require about eighty days beyond the New Year. Second, although Anhui and Hupeh were in difficulties, Tsêng could not go down the river without stopping to dislodge the rebels as he went and consolidate his positions. Three thousand Hunan soldiers had

<sup>34</sup> *Dispatches*, II, 10 f.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-20, under date of December 26, 1853. A catty is about 1½ pounds avoirdupois.

already gone forward under Kiang Chung-yuan, his brother, and another general, and these might be called on for any emergency.<sup>36</sup> Third, Tsêng had been in correspondence with the governor, with Kiang Chung-yuan, and with others regarding the possibility of uniting the strength of several provinces to hold Hupeh firmly. The three Wuhan cities<sup>37</sup> were the most strategic places in the middle Yangtse, commanding the passage to Ssuch'uan, Kwangtung, and the north. The aim of the rebels in crossing Anhui towards Hwangchow and Pa-ho was to secure and hold Wuchang. Control of this point, giving command of the river all the way to Nanking, seemed far more important than the immediate expulsion of rebels from Anhui. His suggestion was that the forces of Hunan and Hupeh unite to prevent the rebels from recapturing Wuchang; then step by step they could be dislodged from the several points along the lower river, and if after that the power of Anhui and Kiangsi could be mobilised, the rebellion could be eventually crushed. He had worked out this plan in consultation with men like Kiang Chung-yuan, Lo Ping-chang (the governor), and others. Fourth, Hunan was overrun with bandits. Hengchow, Ch'enchow, Yungchow, and Kweiyang in the southeast were in their power; many were coming over from Kiangsi to Ch'aling and Anjen; Changning, Kiaho, Lanshan, and Yunghsing were also suffering from their depredations, and troops had been dispatched in all these directions. Could he recall them now, leave his unfinished and unarmed boats, and go half prepared while chaos reigned behind him? Fifth, the question of financing the expedition must be arranged. It was already a drain on the Hunan treasury,

<sup>36</sup> He had also sent 200 gunboats and 200 other boats to Kiang in Anhui. *Nienp'u*, II, 13a.

<sup>37</sup> Wuchang, Hankow, and Hanyang.

and the question of its support must be settled before it should leave the province.<sup>38</sup>

The memorial thus summarised affords us some insight into the character of Tsêng Kuo-fan and his level-headedness. He was wise not to hurry off without adequate preparation, for in that case the fate would almost certainly overtake him that had brought Kiang's promising career to its sudden and tragic end. His concentration on the essentials of the problem revealed a trait that was to appear again and again when higher officials and even the emperor's ministers lost their heads and tried to find palliatives that would serve for the immediate crisis. Tsêng appeared always to take a more far-sighted point of view than any other man associated with him. In this particular matter the eventual winning of the war was the chief question and this could not be accomplished without far more complete preparations than were yet made. Tsêng's ability to think the problem through was coupled with a singular degree of patience, which enabled him to persist until all the obstacles were overcome, and with a remarkable shrewdness in finding the ablest agents through whom to bring these things to pass. When we consider such frenzied appeals as these from the emperor, and his impatience at times, we can but wonder that this exalted personage was willing to repose continued confidence in a servant who, though eventually successful, was very long in bringing about the desired results.

It was during this winter of preparation that Tsêng had differences of opinion with some of the men asso-

<sup>38</sup> *Dispatches*, II, 23-27. In regard to this point Tsêng had already secured permission to sell honorary official ranks (from the sixth to the ninth grades) in return for substantial contributions. Offices had been opened for these sales in all the districts throughout the province and much money had thus been secured. Kiang's death five days before this was not yet known to Tsêng.

ciated with him, in particular a certain Wang Hsin. For the defence of Changsha Wang had suggested that an army be raised, and the governor and provincial treasurer had assented, and asked this Wang to raise a force of three thousand men. His original programme sounded well, but the men and their preparation seemed very insufficient to Tsêng. They had had previous disagreements about sending men to the aid of Kiang Chung-yuan. But in the spring of 1854 Wang had a skirmish with some rebels and killed about thirty of them. This he reported as a great victory. When the joint memorial was being prepared about military affairs, Tsêng looked over the draft and approved it. But as to the final copy which was sent to the central government Tso Tsung-tang added to and took away some of the sections, and among the changes thus made was an account of a false victory. This stirred Tsêng to great indignation, since he detested the propensity of officials to make false claims like this for selfish purposes.<sup>39</sup>

Whilst Tsêng Kuo-fan was in Hengchow, the governor sent Lo Tse-nan with two *ying* of soldiers to put down some bandits, and they passed through Hengchow on January 5. Here the two men in conference drew up the principles according to which the new army was to be organised and governed.<sup>40</sup> The unit of the new force was to be a small regiment or *ying* of 500 soldiers, with an addition of 180 others serving in various capacities. Each *ying* was to be divided into four companies called *shao* and these into eight *tui* (in the guards a *shao* was to be divided into six *tui* only). These regulations were drawn up in great detail, and formed the basis on which all other Hunan armies were organised.

In order to make more rapid progress, additional boat-

<sup>39</sup> *Home Letters*, November 4, 1853, and May 16, 1854.

<sup>40</sup> *Nienp'u*, II, 14a.

yards were set up in Siangtan to supplement those in Hengchow. Three types of boats were prepared, the largest being the *k'wai-hai*, the second the *ch'ang-lung*, and the third converted fishing boats each mounted with a small gun. To these three varieties were now added several tens of *sampan* and smaller boats.<sup>41</sup>

By the end of February Tsêng's preparations were so far advanced that he was able to report to the emperor his intention to start for Hupeh at an early date.<sup>42</sup> From this dispatch we learn that his entire flotilla consisted of one large flagship of the *t'o-ku* type, and 360 other vessels, of four kinds, all fitted to be used as gunboats:

1. Forty of the *k'wai-hai* type, carrying thirty-six oarsmen and scullers and six others.
2. Fifty of the *ch'ang-lung* type, carrying twenty oarsmen and scullers and six others.
3. One hundred fifty of the *sampan* type, carrying a crew of ten.
4. One hundred twenty remodelled fishing boats, probably manned as the *sampans*.

In addition to their crew each of these boats carried gunners.

It proved a difficult task to enlist the necessary marines for this water force, because, except for the river population accustomed to navigate these waterways of the interior, the villagers feared to venture on this new life, unaccustomed as they were to the winds and currents. When at last they were secured, Kwangsi gunners were

<sup>41</sup> The addition of the smaller boats was due to the suggestion of a certain Hwang Mien, who came to see his boats and who told him that the rebels moved about in small boats that were able to escape into creeks and small channels off the rivers and lakes, where they were well concealed. With nothing in the flotilla but the large *k'wai-hai* and *ch'ang-lung* vessels Tsêng need never hope to get into these concealed places to drive them out. It was on the basis of this suggestion that Tsêng added these to his flotilla. *Ta Shih Chi*, I, 5a.

<sup>42</sup> *Dispatches*, II, 31-32a.



employed to give them the necessary training. When Tsêng was ready to set off down the river he had five thousand marines in ten *ying*, of which the half who were placed on the *k'wai-hai* boats were regarded as the active force and those on the *ch'ang-lung* the reserve. They were distinguished by their flags: the active force having a single color on theirs, while the reserves had variegated banners.<sup>43</sup> Chu Yu-hang was in general command of this flotilla.

The land army also consisted of five thousand men under the general command of T'a Chi-pu.<sup>44</sup> Here the *ying* were not uniformly made up of five hundred men; some totalled more and some less.

Including soldiers, artisans, servants, and laborers, the whole expedition numbered about seventeen thousand men, and it was accompanied by stores of ammunition and weapons as well as quantities of provisions which were carried on supply vessels. The expedition set off down the river with 12,000 piculs of rice, 18,000 piculs of charcoal, 40,000 catties of salt, and 30,000 catties of oil.<sup>45</sup>

The financial burden for the support of this expeditionary force was estimated at 80,000 *taels* per month, but a revised estimate reduced the total by 10,000 *taels*. The ordinary revenues were insufficient for such a sum. Tsêng therefore begged the emperor to designate special officials and gentry to raise the necessary sums by collections in Hunan, Kiangsi, and Ssuch'uan. He furthermore requested that four thousand blank patents to official rank, actual and honorary, be supplied, through the sale of which large sums might be realised in these three provinces. These extraordinary measures were

<sup>43</sup> *Ta Shih Chi*, I, 5a.

<sup>44</sup> *Nienp'u*, III, 2a.

<sup>45</sup> *Dispatches*, II, 32b. A picul was about 133½ lbs., and a catty about 1½ lbs.

justified and, indeed, necessitated by the failure of the governor of Hunan to discover any means of securing the needed amounts, thus placing the whole enterprise in jeopardy for lack of funds.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 35 f., under date March 13.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FIRST CAMPAIGNS OF THE HUNAN RECRUITS

THE expedition prepared by Tsêng Kuo-fan was ready to start down the river early in 1854. It was first used against the Taiping rebels who had come up the river into Siangyin and Ningsiang. In March minor victories were won,<sup>1</sup> victories which drove the rebels back on Yochow, whither Tsêng and his entire water force together with about four thousand of his militia hastened. The boats were scattered out to patrol the Tungting Lake near the mouths of the rivers which flow from Hunan.

Urgent appeals came one after another to hasten to the rescue of Hupéh where Wuchang was in danger, the Eastern king having come at the head of his troops in order to capture it and thus command the upper river.<sup>2</sup> Similar appeals were urging relief for Anhui which was being overrun by the Taiping armies. Tsêng was happy in the thought that now at last he was on the way to fulfill the emperor's desire.

Disappointment, however, awaited him. On the fourth of April twenty-four of the new fleet were sunk and several dozen injured by a severe storm that swept across the lake, causing the loss of many persons through drowning. At the same time Wang Hsin, with whom Tsêng had

<sup>1</sup> Reported in detail in the dispatch of March 24. *Dispatches*, II, 38a.

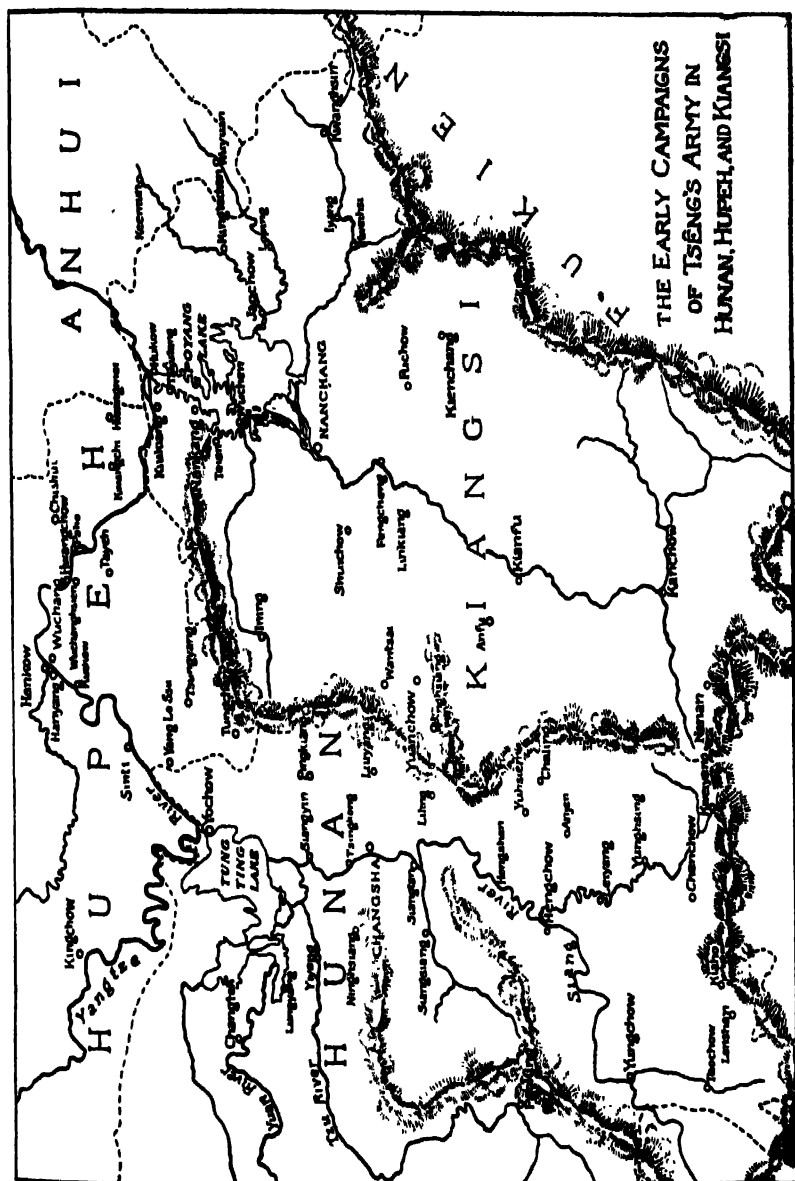
<sup>2</sup> *Taiping T'ienkuo Yeh Shi*, XII, 6.

had differences of opinion during the months of preparation, had left Yochow leading some two thousand of the land force in the direction of Wuchang. Not far from Yangloussu in the hills, they were attacked on all sides by a vastly superior force. Inexperienced in battle and bewildered, they threw away their impedimenta, scattered out in all directions, and eventually reached Yochow and its sheltering walls. Here, reinforced by two thousand of the regulars and six hundred of the new army under Chu Sen-i, they resisted the advance guard of the rebel force. But the main army soon appeared with their yellow banners and red coats, and threw such terror into the hearts of the imperialists that they again fled from their chosen battle ground outside the city—all except one *ying* of five hundred men, who valiantly stood their ground, fighting a whole day against several thousand Taipings.<sup>3</sup> The imperialists were driven behind the walls of Yochow, but through a lack of rice and salt were unprepared to sustain a siege, and Tsêng had only sixteen hundred fresh men left as reserves. The boats in front of the city did some damage to the Taipings, but his reverse, following on the loss of so many boats through the storm, the lack of provisions at Yochow, and the march of the rebels towards Changsha, led Tsêng to retreat in order that Changsha might have suitable defence. Tsêng's dispatch, dated April 17, ended as it had begun by asking the emperor to hand him over to the Board of Punishments for his failure.<sup>4</sup>

The other divisions of the land army had gone by other roads and had made better progress in the direction of

<sup>3</sup> In a letter to his father Tsêng explains this disaster as due to the separation of his men into sections, and the fact that about thirty thousand rebels were thus opposed to only a little over two thousand of his men.

<sup>4</sup> *Dispatches*, II, 42-44.





Ts'ung-yang and T'ungch'eng, but their commanders, T'a Chi-pu and Hu Lin-yi, were also recalled to Changsha.<sup>5</sup> Thus the entire force that had set out a short four weeks before was now back in Changsha.

On their part the insurgents divided their forces at Tsingkong, about twenty miles below Changsha. A portion of them went by land to Siangtan, which they took on April 24. There they erected supplementary defences outside the walls and, seizing several hundred boats, prepared to hold this place against their enemies. Up to that time Siangtan had been a city of great importance, at the head of overland trade with Canton, through which much of the tea—oonams and oopacks—and other exports reached the coast. T'a Chi-pu was sent there April 25 to attempt the recapture of the city; the following day five *ying* of the water force advanced to take part in the attempt. Four days of hard fighting followed in which several thousand of the rebels were killed. On the twenty-seventh a combined attack from the land and river forces resulted in the destruction of the major part of the insurgent fleet and the utter demolition of the land fortifications. The fighting spirit of the new army may be said to have been first aroused in these battles.<sup>6</sup> On the twenty-ninth the rebels were again badly defeated and on May 1 Siangtan was brilliantly recaptured.

These sweeping victories were almost neutralised when, on April 28, Tsêng in person led a force of forty boats and eight hundred soldiers to Tsingkong, only to meet with defeat. A strong south wind was blowing at the time and a swift current running, which combined to make the boats unmanageable. The rebels captured or burned most of them. So mortified was Tsêng at this second failure so soon after his enforced retreat from

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 48.

<sup>6</sup> *Nienp'u*, III, 7b, 8a.

Yochow that he twice attempted to commit suicide by throwing himself into the water, but he was each time rescued by his friends.<sup>7</sup> This was providential in view of the great successes at Siangtan three days later—successes that proved to be more than a gleam of hope, for they were the dawn of another day, because at last the Taipings had met their match and suffered a signal defeat without the intervention of Tartar tribesmen.<sup>8</sup>

In spite of this victory Tsêng now passed through some of the bitterest days of his life, openly flouted by the officials in Changsha.<sup>9</sup> He found dishonesty and crookedness on all sides, and was troubled by some of his own generals. We have already recorded the dishonesty of Wang Hsin, who with the aid of Tso Tsung-tang, had magnified a slight skirmish into a great victory. But he was also embarrassed by the action of members of his own family. His second brother, Kuo-hwang, came to the city and quarrelled with Tsêng. In a letter home he writes: "Of late because my own temper has been too violent, causing me to be inharmonious with men, much has not been accomplished in managing affairs. But the temper of my brother Têng has recently been still more violent and he is unable to lighten any burden for me, but on the contrary multiplies for me many shameful words and causes of quarrel. If there is an extra man in the army we cannot perceive his value; if the house is short a single individual we can feel his loss. Henceforth Têng-huo and the rest of [my] younger brothers are not to come to the camp, but remain at home teaching the growing generation, giving themselves in part to cultivating the fields and in part to study, rising before day,

<sup>7</sup> *Nienp'u*, III, 8a.

<sup>8</sup> We recall that Kiang Chung-yuan had deflected their whole line near Ch'üan Chow.

<sup>9</sup> *Home Letters*, May 16, 1854.



working hard and not yielding to pride—in this way guarding the home and preventing much suffering.’<sup>10</sup>

He also confided to his family his state of mind on the general situation, reporting that there was crookedness everywhere, that he had had to take to task some of his own officers, and adding: “Among the officials many have no regard for me. In future it is possible that nothing can be accomplished; it is simply to bring contempt on the one who bears office for the Emperor and leave only loss of self-respect and hatred. How can you hate men? If you do hate them how can there be any advantage? In general, confusion in the world must first arise through not clearly discriminating between truth and falsehood, not distinguishing white from black. My brothers must have an ardent desire to be firm in distinguishing. But the more they do distinguish, the more will it tend to reveal chaos, and they will have to quiet their spirits to the limit. I hope that my brothers will learn to be peaceful, and learn that Pu-shan’s affair is folly. This affair is henceforth not to be mentioned nor kept in mind.’”<sup>11</sup>

But in these days of extreme mental agitation and trial, which in later years he looked back upon as a period of great moral discipline to him, there was no thought of going home. On the contrary, he set about with stout heart to repair his boats and make changes in his regulations. His defeat at Siangyin was more or less accidental and inevitable, but at Yochow he considered that he had made four prime errors. (1) His army did not rise early enough. Henceforth they were to be up and through with breakfast before dawn. (2) His camps were too vulnerable and must in future be built more strongly, with high,

<sup>10</sup> *Home Letters*, May 12, 1854. On the basis of this letter and similar injunctions none of his brothers entered service through his recommendation.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, May 16, 1854. Pu-shan is another name for Wang Hsin.

thick walls, surrounded by a moat eight feet wide and six feet deep and by a shallower ditch having sharpened bamboo stakes at the bottom. (3) The entire force had not been kept together. He had at Yochow less than a half of his five thousand, the rest being scattered. A total army of ten thousand in one place would have enabled him to withstand the siege. (4) He should have arrested and dealt strictly with persons whose acts were suspicious, and not have been indulgent.<sup>12</sup>

The victories at Siangtan partly disarmed his critics, and even mitigated the severity of the emperor, who remitted the punishment due for failure at Yochow and Tsingkong, rejoiced at the news from Siangtan, and indulged the hope that repairs would soon be effected and the expedition once more go forward to the threatened regions of Hupeh, Kiangsi, and Anhui.<sup>13</sup>

In these defeats and the subsequent experiences at Changsha, we discover some of the limitations of Tsêng as well as his points of excellence. With no experience or training as a soldier, he showed complete lack of skill in the technique of carrying out military operations. In fact, he did not attempt again actually to lead his troops into action, save where, through some unforeseen peril, he was compelled to fight his way out of difficult situations. He did not lack character and displayed a certain element of genius; first, in the patience and perseverance with which he endured what to many a man would be an unbearable loss of prestige and opposition; second, in his ability to select able commanders, for we shall see that his little army brought forth men who in later years rose through their merit to high position in military and civil government; and third, in his clear thinking and power to grasp the far-reaching implications of any situation, thus

<sup>12</sup> *Home Letters*, April 22, 1854.

<sup>13</sup> *Nienp'u*, III, 7b, 8, 10 f.

helping him to arrange his campaigns in a well-considered manner.

Among these men of worth who were made leaders of divisions of the little force, we find T'a Chi-pu, the hero in the victory at Siangtan. Earlier, he had proved his mettle in fights with bandits and had been sent forward from Yochow to the borders of Hupeh, from which strategic position the danger in Changsha and Siangtan had hastened his recall. A second great leader, who to the hour of his death proved a tower of strength to Tsêng, was Hu Lin-yi. His rise was rapid and he became governor of Hupeh in 1856. Others, some of whom failed to attain high honor because of death, or who only after years of struggle came to prominence, were Lo Tse-nan, who was killed at Wuchang in 1856; Chu Yu-hang, commander of the first flotilla; Yang Tsai-fu and P'eng Yu-ling, both of whom eventually reached high official place; Chow Hungshan and Kiang Chung-tsi, brother of Kiang Chung-yuan.<sup>14</sup> Tso Tsung-tang was present at the siege of Changsha, but was now employed in some secretarial capacity in the *yamen*, and was eventually brought out through Tsêng several years later to lead armies in Kiangsi and eventually in Chekiang and Fukien. Li Hung-chang, though well known to Tsêng Kuo-fan in his days at Peking, was not yet prominent in the cause.

T'a Chi-pu, indeed, had already earned special mention and now received the appointment as *t'ituh* of Hunan, but on the earnest representations of Tsêng Kuo-fan, who found him too valuable to spare, permission was granted that he remain in the Hunan army.<sup>15</sup> Preparations were

<sup>14</sup> See *Nienp'u*, III, 9b; also dispatches announcing victory at Siangtan, defeat at Tsingkong, and recommendations for promotion. The merits of these various officers are set forth at length. *Dispatches*, III, 51-65a.

<sup>15</sup> The request is in a dispatch dated June 3. *Dispatches*, III, 71. The favorable reply is noted in the *Nienp'u*, III, 12a.

meanwhile pushed with all speed, extra yards having been set up, and in a short time they were ready to proceed again. During this interval, however, the rebels had scattered out through the districts lying along the western end of the Tungting Lake, capturing Lungyang on the eighth of June, and Changteh on the eleventh. While operations against those who were on the Hupeh shore fell largely to the direction of Kwan Wen, Tártar general of Kingchow, Tsêng managed those in Hunan. T'a Chi-pu was dispatched to Yochow, while Hu Lin-yi and others were sent through Yiyang to Changteh. The rebels attacked the division commanded by Chow Hungshan at Lungyang and defeated it; thereupon Hu Lin-yi was forced to retire to Yiyang and proceed by another route to Changteh.<sup>16</sup>

Additional sailors were trained to man the new boats which were built. By June 10, 1854, all was in readiness to start once more down the river.<sup>17</sup> Strategic considerations demanded that Hunan be cleared of rebels before proceeding to Hupeh, especially the need of preventing interruptions to the line of communications. Consequently the land and water forces were sent forward in three divisions. The western division under Hu Lin-yi was already at Changteh, entrusted with the task of driving back the rebels and clearing the inlets of the Tungting Lake in that region. The central division of combined land and water forces, under T'a Chi-pu and Chu Yu-hang, went down the Siang River and eventually reached Yochow (which was recaptured on July 25), where it was reinforced by Hu Lin-yi's division after the lake was swept clear of the enemy. The eastern division was sent

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Nienp'u, III, 13b; *Dispatches*, III, 1-5 (dated August 4) and 10-15a (dated August 9).

overland to the northeast, through P'ingkiang to Ts'ungyang, at the Hupeh border about halfway to Wuchang.

The two divisions that had concentrated at Yochow fought and defeated a fleet of several hundred Taiping vessels on July 27. Tsêng Kuo-fan believed and reported that Hunan was now free of rebels, but he proved to be mistaken, for scarcely had he sent his dispatch<sup>17</sup> when they again swarmed up the river to Yochow and kept Tsêng Kuo-fan and his lieutenants busy for nearly two months—but with this encouraging change, that the latter were winning victories, being successful in twelve out of the thirteen engagements fought.<sup>18</sup>

On the twenty-fourth of September the expedition was ready to move forward to Hupeh along the river. But the force at Ts'ungyang was held in check by a large Taiping army, and there were a few scattered nests of rebels to be destroyed along the lake shore.<sup>19</sup> T'a Chi-pu, who had been sent from Yochow to reinforce that Ts'ungyang division, drove the rebels back from Yangloussu (September 18) and aided in the capture of the rebel base at Ts'ungyang on the twenty-fifth. The rebels fled, hotly pursued, to Hsienning, where they were defeated. About the same time Kwan Wen, the Tartar general, sent five thousand men from Kingchow, who aided Tsêng's forces at K'ingkow below Yochow on the Yangtse River, and Tsêng was able to move his headquarters to that place on the second of October.

The report of victories was most grateful to the Peking authorities. The emperor conferred on Tsêng the blue button of the third official rank.<sup>20</sup> With becoming modesty

<sup>17</sup> *Dispatches*, III, 19-39. Various dates.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 40-45. Dated September 25, 1854.

<sup>20</sup> There were nine grades of official rank indicated by the insignia worn on caps and official dress. The buttons for the two highest grades were red, and that of the third grade blue.

Tsêng urged that since he was still in mourning it was scarcely suitable for him to accept such distinction, that whatever he had done was simply his bounden duty under the grave circumstances, and that any good results achieved were due solely to the merits of T'a Chi-pu, Lo Tse-nan, Yang Tsai-fu, and others. He would be glad if the emperor did not press the promotion on him.<sup>21</sup> The emperor's reply to this memorial said that there was no higher form of filial piety than to come to the rescue of the imperilled country, a deed that must satisfy his departed mother's spirit. For his own part he appreciated Tsêng's great merit and no one in the land was ignorant of it.

The initial stages of the enterprise were now past. The experiment was a decided success, and the whole force now set off along the Great River to Hupeh, where the Wuhan cities were in hostile hands. Though comparatively few in numbers, the men who followed Tsêng were well drilled and well officered. Rebuffs, delays, and dark years still lay ahead, but it was only in the multiplication of this new type of soldiers and marines that hope of ultimate victory could be placed. At that moment great armies under veteran *t'ituhs* and imperial commissioners camped like locusts at Nanking, Yangchow, and Chin-kiang. Sometimes they captured small detachments of rebels who freely came and went, but they never faced large armies, or, if they did, it was almost inevitably to be defeated. A sufficient force of these new Hunan armies could have prevented the spread of the rebellion from Kwangsi, or quickly have put it down at Nanking. Now, however, the rebels were intrenched in the three strongholds and their hordes of followers were carrying on guerrilla warfare, going from district to district, capturing towns and abandoning them after they were looted.

<sup>21</sup> *Dispatches*, III, 46.

Imperial soldiers were too scattered and too feeble to strike a blow. Timid magistrates and prefects fled from their posts; brave ones died on the walls, tragic but fruitless sacrifices.

The Taiping cause had deteriorated, their armies no longer fighting with the same fervor as that first one from Kwangsi, while the religious illusions of their chiefs became constantly more erratic, their pretensions to divinity more insistent. Yet the opportunity for plunder and adventure continued to make a strong appeal to the classes whence the robber bands came, and their predatory companies, great and small, with yellow-robed or red-robed leaders, went almost unchecked to and fro, like a fire that burns over dry prairies. Tsêng's band of thirteen thousand, which in 1850 or 1851 might have put down the movement with ease, could only point the way now.

Final arrangements having been made, it sailed down the river to deliver Wuchang from the enemy. This city had fallen to the Eastern king in June, 1854, while Tsêng was repairing the damage caused by his earlier defeats. To prevent this catastrophe the central government had sent Tsêng many frantic dispatches while Hupeh was in danger the previous winter and spring, and one of the bitter thoughts during those humiliating days in Changsha had been that his failure had brought about the loss of the capital of Hupeh, for this was a strategic point on a strategic line. The thousand miles of the Yangtse River from the point where it breaks through the gorges above Ichang to the bar at Woosung drains a vast and fertile region, the heart of China. Of this important waterway the most strategic portion is that which stretches from Yochow to Hukow at the mouth of the Poyang Lake, a distance of about three hundred miles. Yochow controls the outlet of the Tungting Lake, into which flow the

waters of the Yangtse from Ssuch'uan and those of the Hunan-Kweichow basin. At Hankow it receives the drainage of northern Hupeh and a part of Honan from the Han River, and, through the Poyang Lake, the outlet by water to all of Kiangsi. For the portion between Hukow and Nanking the city of Anking and Kingchu-kwan are of the greatest importance.

Although Tsêng could not move his armies forward until after the capture of Ts'ungyang and Hsienning on September 25 and 30, the siege of Wuchang had already been started by a portion of his force under Lo Tse-nan and T'a Chi-pu, who gave help to Kwan Wen (September 22). As soon as the main force arrived the siege began in earnest. In a general assault on October 12 and 13 the outer defences were shattered and a thousand boats burned. After several hours of fierce fighting on the fourteenth, Hanyang and Wuchang fell simultaneously. This was a fearful blow to the Taipings, who had placed great stress on holding these cities and believed them to be impregnable, particularly Wuchang. Their capture was therefore a cheering victory for the imperialists,<sup>22</sup> particularly since the rebels had abandoned Hwangchow, a strategic town near the Anhui border north of the Yangtse, and Wuchang-hsien opposite, thus practically clearing Hupeh of rebels.<sup>23</sup>

In reporting these victories Tsêng not only made the usual recommendations for rewards to his own followers, but urged the restoration to office of former officials relegated to private life for trivial or technical faults. His own share in the honors awarded was the right to wear a single-eyed peacock feather and appointment as acting

<sup>22</sup> *Dispatches*, III, 56-62; *Nienp'u*, III, 18. Here the date is the fourteenth. *Hatsuzoku Ran Shi* does not mention the fall of the cities.

<sup>23</sup> Not the provincial capital.



governor of Hupeh.<sup>24</sup> He was commanded to divide his army and fleet and hasten down the river to Nanking, taking Kiukiang and Anking as he went, acting in consultation with Yang Pei, viceroy of Hukwang, and T'a Chi-pu.<sup>25</sup>

For the time being this last order was impossible to follow, because scattered groups of fleeing rebels were taking refuge in the Han River and small tributary streams. These must first be dealt with. Several dozen *sampan* were sent to this region, and on the fifteenth of October they rounded up and burned the vessels of the enemy, more than a thousand in number, which were trying to get back into the Yangtse.<sup>26</sup>

Military affairs were now progressing favorably, but the maintenance of the troops was a matter of more concern than ever before, as shown by a dispatch of October 21, in which Tsêng complains of very poor provincial support for his armies. Had he accepted the office as acting governor of Hupeh this might have been somewhat remedied, because Tsêng would then have had direct control over provincial funds; but as things were, he was more or less at the mercy of the regular officials of various provinces whom he could reach only indirectly through the emperor. The heavy strain of maintaining his lengthening line of communications and of securing needed reinforcements and supplies might, he feared, re-

<sup>24</sup> The peacock feather was like a modern decoration and three grades were recognised, single-eyed, double-eyed, and triple-eyed. Tsêng refused the office of acting governor because, as he wrote home in a letter of November 3, it would offend his mother's memory. To raise troops and help to quell the rebellion are duties not to be avoided by a loyal officer, but to accept office and strive for honors must be scrupulously avoided during the period of mourning. The emperor accepted Tsêng's refusal to take the office but reprimanded him for not using the title pending the acceptance of his petition. *Nienp'u*, III, 22b, 23.

<sup>25</sup> Imperial mandate summarised in *Nienp'u*, III, 20a.

<sup>26</sup> *Nienp'u*, III, 20; *Home Letters*, November 3, 1854.

sult in a breakdown which would leave him stranded. Moreover, he feared the result of this financial uncertainty on the morale of his men, particularly because the harassed and discontented populace might at any moment swell the rebel ranks. He therefore begged the imperial government to secure grants of money from Kwangtung and Ssuch'uan, together with 80,000 *taels* of silver from Kiangsi.<sup>27</sup>

This brings out clearly the financial weakness of China. The practices of modern public finance were then far below the horizon in what was still essentially a mediaeval state. Any war that arose must pay its own way in whatever manner was possible. This great rebellion had already impoverished the treasuries of several fruitful and wealthy provinces to such an extent that they were failing to remit their allotted taxes to Peking. The coinage was debased; the large, well-made brass coins of K'anghsi and K'ienlung were giving place to the inferior coinage of Hsienfung and his successors who came into this heritage of poverty. Had the modern system of transferring the burden of war to another generation through the issue of government obligations been known at this time, and had the government been sufficiently centralised, it is fairly certain that the Taiping rebellion might have been crushed within a year after it gained headway. Tsêng Kuo-fan, as can be seen all through his dispatches, year after year, by constantly devising methods for squeezing out new taxes, managed with the utmost difficulty to get enough to maintain the small force that he dared to employ. Had there been a strong government with relatively unimpaired credit behind him, Tsêng could easily have gathered a force ten times as great as the one he did employ, and brought the T'ienwang to terms. For in Nanking the latter was already feeling the

<sup>27</sup> *Dispatches*, III, 67-71.

pinch of poverty and was only kept alive by the incessant activity of his scattered armies which continued to send in from Anhui and Kiangsi plunder which was sometimes kept out of Nanking by the besieging armies. That this was not always enough is proved by the necessity he was under, on October 19, 1854, of driving out of Nanking all the women who had been retained as prisoners, those especially strong or beautiful alone excepted, in order to conserve food.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, the soldiers on that side were growing definitely inferior to the imperialists as now organised, and far inferior to the earnest, dashing troops that had broken through the imperialist lines in Kwangsi to the terror of official China.

But there was no way to mobilise the finances of the nation without revolutionising the entire system of checks and balances between provincial and national authorities. The Taiping rebellion of itself was more of a problem than Hsienfung's advisers and administrators could meet; complete administrative readjustment was not practicable, if it ever occurred to their minds. They must "muddle through" as best they could with the cumbrous machinery devised for another purpose, which was, however, the only kind that functioned at all.

This point is worth dwelling on, because the rebellion was as good as crushed if only the strength of the nation could have been brought to bear on the Taiping forces. The latter had not and—except in a few regions in the central provinces where they had control for several years, and possibly not even there—apparently did not establish any sort of permanent civil government, but, to the end of their activities, derived a large portion of their revenues from plunder.<sup>29</sup> With the decentralisation

<sup>28</sup> *P'ingting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, III, 20b, 21a; *Hatsuzoku Ran Shi*, p. 29.

<sup>29</sup> Michie's report to Bruce, British minister in Peking, telling of his observations in Nanking in 1861, in the Blue Book on the Taiping rebellion,

of the imperial government no remedies were possible for the difficulties in which Tsêng found himself; therefore the Taiping rebels were destined to go on winning victories for many years and to do incalculable damage. But now they were being driven back from the north, where Mongol tribesmen had been brought into action, and in Hupeh by country recruits which were winning victories over superior forces in nearly every engagement. Even the regulars, with a small intermixture of 'braves,' were winning some advantages near Nanking. In Anhui, where Li Hung-chang was fighting with forces similar to Tsêng's, some victories had been reported.<sup>30</sup> Large sums of money were being spent, but under such conditions as to waste it in the old way upon the old type of forces rather than to spend it profitably for new, effective armies.

Separating his army and navy into three divisions, Tsêng set off, early in November, towards Nanking. One division of Tsêng's land forces, under T'a Chi-pu, marched along the road south of the river through Tayeh (now the center of the great iron mines) and Hsingkuo. Similarly Kwei Ming, leading Hupeh forces, marched north of the river, with orders to take Kichow and Kwangchih. The flotilla under Tsêng himself went down in two divisions. The army under T'a Chi-pu and the water force under Tsêng followed their programmes and reached T'ienchia-chen, about forty miles above Kiu-kiang. But the second division under Kwei Ming was delayed through the inefficiency of that commander, and he was finally relieved of command and his force attached to Tsêng.<sup>31</sup>

1862, states that they were still as late as that living, not on taxes and other regular sources of income, but chiefly on plunder. See MacNair, *Modern Chinese History, Selected Readings*, pp. 348 ff.

<sup>30</sup> P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh, III, 18b, 19a.

<sup>31</sup> Nienp'u, III, 21.

Meanwhile the rebels about T'ienchia-chen had built very strong defences, and had stretched two great chains, fastened to pontoons, across the river, making it necessary for the imperialists to capture P'anpei hill as a preliminary to cutting the chains. The rebel strength was considerable at this point; they were led by Ts'in Jih-kang, the Yenwang.<sup>32</sup> After stubborn fighting on three separate days, the hill was eventually captured, November 24, 1854, and ten thousand of its defenders were reported slain.<sup>33</sup> By the last of November all the rebels were concentrated at T'ienchia-chen. A naval battle on December 2 resulted in their total defeat, four thousand of their boats being destroyed and the chains cut. This was by far the greatest contest that had fallen to the Hunan water forces. It was learned from intercepted papers that several thousand of the original rebels, together with "many tens of thousands" of their followers, had been sent there under orders from the Eastern king to hold the place at any cost.<sup>34</sup> They were now forced to retire to Kiukiang.

Shi Ta-k'ai, the Assistant king, then hurried from Anhui to Kiukiang to prevent an imperialist victory in the Poyang region.<sup>35</sup> By the time Tsêng arrived before the city the Taiping armies held it securely, and moreover they had seen to it that boats were stationed within the Poyang Lake. Try as he would, Tsêng could not make the slightest headway at Kiukiang, and the boats that he sent into the lake to attack Takut'ang were bottled up by the rebels, who now proceeded to attack Tsêng's larger vessels with fire-boats compelling them to retire to Kiukiang. The rebels from Huk'ow then skirted the opposite bank of the river until they got above Kiukiang, whence they attacked the main flotilla with fire-boats and in-

<sup>32</sup> *Dispatches*, IV, 34.

<sup>34</sup> *Dispatches*, IV, 42.

<sup>33</sup> *Nienp'u*, III, 24a.

<sup>35</sup> *Taiping T'ienkuo T'eh Shi*, XII, 18 ff.

cendiary missiles, thereby destroying several of Tsêng's vessels and even capturing his flagship, on which were many valuable papers and some recently conferred gifts from the emperor. Tsêng himself barely escaped capture in a small boat.<sup>36</sup>

These reverses robbed the Hunan forces of their fighting spirit. The problem of the commissariat also became serious. Moreover, to add to Tsêng's difficulty, many of his own crews, in a mutinous spirit, withdrew above Wusueh. Only the persuasion of his close friends, Lo Tse-nan and others, prevented Tsêng's ending his life by mounting a horse and riding into the midst of his adversaries.<sup>37</sup> In a dispatch of February 16 he begged the emperor to punish him for his defeats, but in view of his previous victories he was excused.<sup>38</sup> The end of his misfortunes had not yet come, for a storm now wrecked twenty-two of his *ch'ang-lung* and *sampan* vessels and badly damaged twenty-four more; those that were able to move sailed up to Kingkow above Hankow and the plan for an advance to Nanking was indefinitely postponed.<sup>39</sup>

Tsêng recommended setting up a boat-yard at Sint'i, not far from Yochow, under supervision of Li Mung-ch'un and P'eng Yu-ling, supported financially by the Hukwang viceroy and the governor of Hunan.<sup>40</sup> What remained of the fleet was to coöperate with Hu Lin-yi in opposing the rebels who were advancing towards Wuchang, whilst Tsêng himself, with a view to fostering the fighting spirit of his men, was to remain at Kiukiang and keep in touch with the fleet imprisoned within the lake. To proceed with all his army to Nanchang, whither a portion of the rebels had gone, was unthinkable as long as his line of communication was in so precarious a condi-

<sup>36</sup> *Nienp'u*, III, 29b, 30a; *Dispatches*, V, 3-6; *Home Letters*, V, 1.

<sup>37</sup> *Nienp'u*, III, 30a.

<sup>38</sup> *Dispatches*, V, 3-6.

<sup>39</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 1.

<sup>40</sup> *Dispatches*, V, 12-14 (February 24).

tion. Should Kiukiang be taken, he would consider moving on to one of the interior cities of Kiangsi and hold his fleet and army together until the main fleet was repaired and in commission once more. He now perceived, when it was too late, the blunder he had committed in not having more thoroughly provided for the defence of the Wuhan cities.

Following this plan, T'a Chi-pu was left to besiege Kiukiang, but Tsêng himself went to Nanchang, the capital of Kiangsi, which he reached on March 5, 1855. Lo Tse-nan, with a portion of the army, was detached from the siege of Kiukiang and sent to join the lake flotilla. Hu Lin-yi received appointment as provincial treasurer of Hupeh and was entrusted with the defence of that province. Officers were dispatched to Hunan to recruit additional marines. Several more large vessels were ordered in Kiangsi.<sup>41</sup>

Nevertheless the storm clouds were growing blacker for the imperialists. Proceeding up the Yangtse along both banks and taking town after town as they went, the insurgents arrived at Hankow on February 23, 1855.<sup>42</sup> The Eastern king, Yang Siu-ch'ing, came in person to direct these forces and they proved more than a match for the imperialists. For the third time Wuchang fell to the Taiping armies on April 3, the loyal troops retreating to Kingkow where the larger vessels of the fleet were.<sup>43</sup> In Kiangsi also Tsêng's affairs had been going from bad to worse. The rebels from Huk'ow, traversing the east shores of the Poyang Lake, captured a large number of towns in the prefectures of Kwanghsin and

<sup>41</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 2b, 3a; *Dispatches*, V, 17-19.

<sup>42</sup> *Dispatches*, V, 25.

<sup>43</sup> *P'ing-t'ing Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, IV, 4b, 5; *Hatsuzoku Ran Shi*, p. 33. Some authorities date the fall April 20, but Tsêng in a letter home (V, 2a) says that the news of the fall reached him on April 15.

Jaochow. On March 16 the flotilla was ordered to attack the rebels at K'angshan while Lo Tse-nan led seven thousand men from Nanchang to the east of the lake in the hope of recovering some of the fallen cities, T'a Chi-pu still remaining in charge of the siege at Kiukiang.<sup>44</sup> The support of these forces, which were now completely detached from Hunan, Tsêng asked the emperor to lay as a charge upon the governor of Kiangsi, aided by the provinces of Fukien and Chekiang. A new force of five thousand was also requested to be recruited by Yuan Chia-san. By this time the Taiping control of the roads was so complete that Tsêng's memorials had to be sent north-west through Hunan to Kingchow in Hupeh.<sup>45</sup> Tsêng realised his own danger, and likewise the possibility that the rebels might advance from their base in Wuchang to the attack of his home province, Hunan. In that contingency it might be necessary for T'a Chi-pu and himself to go back to defend their own homes.<sup>46</sup>

Again we are brought face to face with Tsêng's great difficulty, money, or its lack, and practically nothing else.<sup>47</sup> His thirteen thousand soldiers were as good as any of the Taipings and could easily encounter and defeat superior numbers; they were scarcely equal, however, to the hordes that came in waves up the Yangtse. His disaster at Kiukiang had been due in the last analysis to lack of funds, and at that moment he was unable to advance because through poverty he could not get enough men to carry on warfare on a suitable scale, with forces for attack, with reserves enough in the camps, and with large garrisons to hold the captured cities. With men

<sup>44</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 4a.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 5a; *Dispatches*, V, 25-33.

<sup>46</sup> We must remember that all Tsêng's men as well as their commander were Hunanese, and that it is difficult to exaggerate the local and provincial sentiment in China at that period.

<sup>47</sup> *Home Letters*, V, 2a.



and money Tsêng felt that the war could be won; without them all was lost. The limitations placed on him were irksome indeed. He was eager to retire to his quiet countryside; nothing but an abiding sense of loyalty held him true to a task that seemed well-nigh hopeless.<sup>48</sup>

By the end of April Tsêng had secured, by great efforts, a fleet of two hundred boats with three thousand well-drilled men, to join Lo Tse-nan in the Jaochow and Kwanghsin region. Li T'su-ch'ing had been sent to Nank'ang-fu.<sup>49</sup> These regions were on opposite sides of the lake, and the flotilla found its chief usefulness in keeping the rebels apart and communications open between Tsêng's divided army. But these small imperialist forces were entirely inadequate to face the Taipings then in central China. The Eastern king was at Wuchang, Shi Ta-k'ai, one of their ablest generals, at Kiukiang, and Lo Ta-kang at Hankow. Taiping armies were overrunning the eastern portion of Kiangsi, including Kingtechén, the site of the imperial potteries. There is some evidence that they contemplated an invasion of Chekiang along the road through Kwanghsin. This Tsêng hoped to be able to frustrate by a scheme for unified control of the whole military area, and the emperor appointed him commander-in-chief to carry out his proposed plans. But the plan was quite too elaborate and ambitious for immediate enforcement owing to the scarcity of men, the small number of boats in their lake flotilla, and the need for holding a large detachment at Kiukiang.<sup>50</sup>

During the month of May a few victories were reported by Lo Tse-nan, and the rebels in that region retired into Chekiang. But these encouraging episodes were offset by the quarrel that arose between Tsêng and the governor

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Dispatches*, V, 27.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 25, also 32-36. The plan implied four military districts embracing the provinces of Hupeh, Anhui, and Kiangsi.

over the enrollment and management of recruits, and particularly over the funds necessary for their support. The quarrel became so bitter that Tsêng decided to move his headquarters from Nanchang to Wuch'en-chen, and later to Nank'ang-fu, both on the east shore of the lake. Eventually he succeeded in having the governor removed.<sup>51</sup>

Appeals from Chekiang now reached Lo Tse-nan to come into that province to defeat the rebels whom he had driven out of Kiangsi, but when he was ready to start in that direction word came that a band of the enemy from Hupeh had entered Kiangsi from the west and were now at Ining, where they were severely oppressing the people and threatening Nanchang itself. This news was sufficient to recall Lo from the direction of Chekiang, not only because of the danger to Kiangsi but because this city communicated directly with P'ingkiang and Liuyang and was a back-door entrance to Hunan. But his withdrawal left the entire eastern half of Kiangsi open to the rebels. Tsêng himself was still at Nank'ang-fu and found it difficult to keep in communication either with T'a Chi-pu at Kiukiang or with the force at Nanchang, which was now threatened from the west. This threat was removed late in August by the victory of Lo Tse-nan after a three days' fight.<sup>52</sup>

In order to prepare for future victories Tsêng suggested the remodelling of the Hupeh armies, for the regulars, many of whom were then at Teian, were useless. He also secured the consent of the emperor for Yang Tsai-fu to enroll more men in Hunan, which was agreed to. Eventually Yang appeared at Kingkow with a large number of new vessels to coöperate with Hu Lin-yi in the

<sup>51</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 7. For the dispatch on the governor's stubbornness (July 25, 1855), see *Dispatches*, V, 61 ff.

<sup>52</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 10-12; *Dispatches*, VI, 6-13.

attempt to recapture the Wuhan cities.<sup>53</sup> While things were slowly progressing, Teian, where the whole Hupeh army had concentrated, was lost, thus proving Tsêng's contention regarding that force. The viceroy was now replaced by the Tartar general, Kwan Wen. In Kiangsi a more serious loss was the death of T'a Chi-pu, who was laying siege to Kiukiang. Chow Hung-shan, a trustworthy but not particularly able man, was appointed to his command.<sup>54</sup>

The regular army during August went up the river from Nanking and captured the city of Wuhu in the rice district about fifty miles above Nanking.<sup>55</sup> In the same month Tsêng's lake flotilla succeeded in overthrowing the fortifications at Hukow, thus affording free communication with the Yangtse once more.<sup>56</sup>

But panic now seized on the provincial authorities of Hunan; on three sides their security was menaced. Out of Kwangtung and Kwangsi new rebels surged forth,—not Taipings, but possible recruits to their cause,—whose presence in southeastern Hunan menaced that province and Kiangsi. Into the western districts Nien rebels had penetrated, and to the northwest the Taipings from Hupeh threatened to enter the province again. The governor therefore memorialised the emperor, asking that Lo Tse-nan be sent from Ining to the defence of Hunan. Against this Tsêng entered a vigorous protest, because he considered Lo's army to be one of the most necessary units in his plan of operations, and its withdrawal a source of danger to the whole campaign. The governor of Hunan, he thought, should meet the menace of local bandits with his own men. Through his representations

<sup>53</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 11.

<sup>54</sup> *Dispatches*, VI, 1-3.

<sup>55</sup> *P'ing-ting Yuch-fei Chi-lueh*, IV, 15b.

<sup>56</sup> *Dispatches*, VI, 14-18; *P'ing-ting Yuch-fei Chi-lueh*, IV, 16a.

the emperor was persuaded rather to permit Lo Tse-nan to press on towards Wuchang, with the hope that he might help drive the rebels from Hupeh and open the river to Hukow as soon as possible.<sup>57</sup>

The work of clearing the lake region had progressed well during the summer and early fall. But no sooner was that accomplished than the rebels from Kwangtung, who had so frightened the governor of Hunan a few weeks before, left Hunan and entered Kian-fu, south of Nanchang. They were reinforced by the Assistant king, Shi Ta-k'ai, who gathered the rebels from the regions of Hupeh which were being made untenable for them by Lo Tse-nan, and took city after city in western Kiangsi, until by Christmas, 1855, practically all the towns in the four prefectures of Shuichow, Lingkiang, Yuanchow, and Kian had fallen.<sup>58</sup> The Assistant king was supposed to be leading an army of 100,000 men, and the forces of the governor were far from able to cope with so powerful and skillful an adversary. Tsêng, on his part, saw but one course open to him, namely, to gather all his forces from the regions of Kiukiang, Hukow, and the Lake districts to Nanchang, there to stand on the defensive with Lo Tse-nan to hold the road to Hupeh and prevent the rebels from attacking in the rear. His messages could now go only through Chekiang. He was practically cut off.

The year 1855 thus ended in gloom. Tsêng was in effect a prisoner at Nanchang; Wuchang and Kiukiang were in rebel hands, and the control of the river from Nanking to Kingkow was theirs also. On the other hand, the Hunan reinforcements at Kingkow, while not yet strong enough to take the offensive, were able to prevent the insurgents from passing them and entering Hunan. Shi Ta-k'ai was in western Kiangsi to be sure, but he was not

<sup>57</sup> *Dispatches*, VI, 23-25.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 61-64a.

on the river. A few minor successes had been won in Anhui. Yet on the whole the picture was a dark one. Had the Taipings been wisely guided and more ably led, the emperor might well have trembled on his throne.

## CHAPTER IX

### TAIPING DISSENSIONS AND IMPERIAL DISAPPOINTMENTS

OUTWARDLY the Taiping cause was never brighter than during the last half of 1855. Within, however, jealousies and dissensions were approaching the point of danger, and were destined soon to tear into shreds the unity of Taipingdom, robbing it of the Eastern and Northern kings and sending Shi Ta-k'ai off to become a knight errant who led his followers against many a city in useless enterprise, far away to the very borders of Tibet.

With their armies all went well. Every strategic point in the middle Yangtse was in their hands. They had met the threat of annihilation in 1855, had held Kiukiang and Hukow in an iron grasp, while they poured in waves across Anhui, up the river, and into the province of Kiangsi. The pitifully small force under Tsêng and his generals, even with the recruits added to the number, were far from being sufficient. But trouble long brewing in the Taiping ranks came to a climax during 1856 in the arrogance and assumptions of the Eastern king. He will be remembered as the man who spoke in the name of God the Father, who later applied to himself the terms Comforter and Holy Ghost. His usurpations had gone so far that he virtually made himself dictator in Nanking, using his divine pretensions to ride roughshod over the other "kings" and even to control the T'ienwang.

At last he demanded imperial rank.<sup>1</sup> "He wanted the Tienwang to make him a *Wan-sui*, and on account of his wielding the power single-handed he finally compelled the Tienwang to proceed in person to his palace and perform the ceremony there. The Pei wang and Yi wang<sup>2</sup> were moved at this and determined secretly to exterminate the Tungwang as well as his three brothers, but no more."<sup>3</sup>

Before proceeding with this story let us glance for a moment at the progress of the loyalists. The beginning of 1856 found them gathering for the attack on Wuchang and winning minor victories in the outlying districts. In this campaign Lo Tse-nan, who had been reckoned one of Tsêng's best generals next to T'a Chi-pu, received a mortal wound below the walls of Wuchang, April 6, and died on the twelfth. He was granted the posthumous rank of governor in recognition of his great services.<sup>4</sup> It was not until the very end of the year, however, that the city of Wuchang fell to the imperial armies after having been in rebel hands for more than eighteen months,<sup>5</sup> and practically under siege nearly a year. It was only when all the roads over which grain could reach the rebels were blocked that they issued forth from the gates and escaped. As a capture the achievement was valuable but it was not spectacular.

In June came the most severe blow the regular army had experienced since the first days of the rebellion. From the "great camp" outside Nanking had gone a relief expedition to Chinkiang, where the imperialists were in difficulties. The Eastern king chose that moment to order

<sup>1</sup> The quotation and general account of this paragraph are from the *Autobiography* of the Chungwang, pp. 7 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Wan-sui*, literally 'Ten thousand years,' is the designation of the emperor. The Pei-wang and Yi-wang were respectively the Northern and Assistant kings. The Tung-wang was the Eastern king.

<sup>3</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-luch*, V, 3b.    <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 20, 21.

an attack on the camp outside Nanking, led by Li Siu-ch'ing (later the Chungwang) and others. This was delivered by a combination of all the insurgents available; they struck a smashing blow, divided the imperialists, and compelled a general retirement to Tanyang.<sup>6</sup> General Hsiang Yung committed suicide in atonement for his failure, and left his successor, Ho Chun, to gather together the scattered army and reestablish it at the new base. He tried to restore the morale of his army and revive its organisation after the unexpected disaster by moving out to capture the cities of Anhui and Kiangsi instead of sitting still. Chang Kuo-liang coöperated with him in the command of the forces.

In Anhui the Taipings had their headquarters at San Ho, the government holding Lüchow as their base. General Ho Chun decided to strike a decisive blow and led an attack in person (September 17). This effort was a complete success, the enemy being routed. More than five thousand were slain and numbers were drowned in the river.<sup>7</sup> Another of their bases, Ch'ao-hsien, a strongly defended source of supplies for Nanking, succumbed to the imperialists on the twenty-seventh of September. Large quantities of military supplies fell into government hands. But Anhui as a whole was still far from conquered; the Taipings remained in Anking and only small detachments of loyal troops were available for necessary attacks on a few specific localities. These few victories were important, however, in revealing improvement in the fighting ability of the imperial armies, whose ranks now included men accustomed to actual warfare.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 8. A very brief account. The official account with details was published in the *Peking Gazette* of July 2, 1856.

<sup>7</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, V, 13b, 14a.

<sup>8</sup> Between the middle of February and the middle of March, the northern expedition, which, ever since it was first checked near Tientsin, two years before, had been slowly beaten back from point to point by Sen-



Inside the city of Nanking the jealousies among the chiefs culminated, after the rebel successes earlier in the year, and especially after the great defeat of the besieging army in June, in the murder of the Eastern king and all his relatives by the others combined against him. But matters were not remedied by his death, because the Northern king, Wei Ch'ang-hui, followed in the footsteps of Yang, and, with insane jealousy of Shi Ta-k'ai, forced that able man to flee from Nanking. After he was gone to Ningkuo, Wei set upon his family and butchered them in cold blood. Then this maniac commenced a series of cruel and indiscriminate butcheries of men, women, and children which at last caused the people of Nanking to rise against him. His head was sent as a bloody trophy to the Assistant king in Ningkuo, and the latter returned to Nanking prepared to take his place in the government of the rebels.<sup>9</sup> He secured high place in the government, but it became apparent to him that the T'ienwang preferred to rule through his own brothers. These brothers had no gifts either in military strategy or in the management of state affairs, and inasmuch as their divine brother was obsessed with the belief that God would always intervene on their side, they insisted on overriding whatever prudent policies were initiated by Shi Ta-k'ai, who was a skillful and talented general. Hence he left the capital and preferred henceforth to carry on operations where he would not constantly be under their jealous eyes.<sup>10</sup>

kolintsin, was finally conquered. Its brave leader, Lin Hung-ch'iang, was sent to Peking, where he was put to death. Shanghai also, which had been in Triad hands since 1853, was delivered by Chiurhanga, governor of Kiangsu.

The Chungwang in his *Autobiography* (p. 19), speaking of a period a little later, says that the bravery of the imperialists was on the increase.

<sup>9</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 9.

There remained two men of ability to help direct Taiping affairs, Ch'eng Yu-ch'en, who was then a minister of state and later the Yingwang, and Li Siu-ch'ing, later the Chungwang and sole prop of the state in its last days. The latter had joined the cause as a private in Kwangsi, had served with Shi Ta-k'ai in his Anhui campaign in 1854, and later was among those who led in the attack on the forces of Hsiang Yung which sent them reeling to Tanyang in 1856. After this he was put in control of important operations in Anhui, and some time later was promoted to be a *wang*. It was against his forces that General Gordon later fought. He was a man of clear insight and was faithful to the bitter end. Nor was he backward about expressing his opinion—generally a sane one—to the T'ienwang himself. He was inclined to attribute the final collapse of the movement primarily to the mistake of Hung Jen-kan (Hung Jin), who, in 1859, came from Hong Kong to join the movement, and so dominated the T'ienwang that other advisers could secure no consideration; and in a lesser degree to the disposition of the monarch to rely too much on divine interposition.

These internal rivalries and readjustments in 1856 so weakened the Taiping cause that if the loyalists had only taken advantage of them the war would have been speedily ended. They came to their climax, however, at the very time when imperial arms and morale had suffered a severe blow in the defeat outside Nanking, and Tsêng was too far away and too beset by enemies to move from Nanchang. No wonder that even the Chungwang was able to look back on this moment of peril and see the hand of an inscrutable providence so ordering affairs as to cause the defeat of the imperialists and the death of their general first, and the dissension of the chiefs and the uproar in Nanking afterwards, instead of having the disturbances first, with their almost certain

outcome of victory for the imperialists and the destruction of the Kwangsi cause.

It happened just at this time that the Eastern King was assassinated, an event that was surely ordained by heaven. Had General Heang-yung not been defeated, but still held on to Hsiao-ling-wei, he might have availed himself of the disturbances in the capital and captured it, as it could not possibly have held out at that time. But it so happened that Heang-yung was defeated before the trouble at home, a conclusive evidence of the inscrutable ways of providence which man is not permitted to fathom. The insurrection in the city commenced in the sixth year. The Tungwang was first murdered, then the Pei wang and after that the Yiwang forced by the Ngan and Foo Princes to flee from the city.<sup>11</sup>

The Chungwang also indicates that another method was open to the imperialists in these days of crisis, namely, the offering of liberal terms to the leaders who might easily have been brought over. For at the moment there was no commanding personage in the city, no one could agree with anyone else, and the T'ienwang was suspicious of all but the members of his immediate family.

There was a unanimous desire at that time to separate, but fears were entertained that they would only be decapitated, as they had learnt that the Imperialists spared no Kwangsi men that fell into their hands; so instead of dispersing they united more closely together. Had the Imperialist dynasty been willing to spare Kwangsi men a breakup would have taken place long ago.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, partly through weakness at a critical moment and partly because of a failure to be conciliatory at the proper moment—possibly through ignorance of the opportunity offered, or lack of a far-sighted statesman at Pe-

<sup>11</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 17.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

king—they lost the chance of the hour and permitted the Taipings to be reorganised under the two surpassingly able leaders who now came forward. It is possible that the imperialists were incapable of taking any but a contemptuous view of the rebels and might not have been able to see the advantage of a policy of conciliation in any case. Their proclamations always refer to the insurgents in terms of the utmost disrespect, and attribute their successes mainly to the incompetence of the imperialist generals.

A proclamation of March 25, 1856, is very characteristic. After contrasting the inefficiency of the forces in central China with those Mongol armies that had checked and driven back the northern expedition, and after threatening to bring on additional tribesmen to quell the rebels along the Yangtse, the emperor indulges in the confident boast: "We conceive that it would not be difficult with one roll of the drum to take those wretched vagabonds and sweep them from the face of the earth."<sup>13</sup> So long as the imperial proclamations thus bombastically underrated the movement (however tremblingly the brush in exalted hands framed the bold words) there was little hope of any compromise. The Taipings who might otherwise have made indirect overtures could not under these circumstances look for much mercy after submission.

Meanwhile what of Tsêng Kuo-fan and affairs in Kiangsi? At the end of 1855 he was in isolation at Nanchang, his soldiers were several months in arrears of pay, and communications were cut with the outside world. Shi Ta-k'ai, aided by men from Kwangtung, had overrun all the southern and southeastern portions of the province, while the rebels were in possession of the lake districts and the tea regions to the east. During the year 1856 a

<sup>13</sup> From the *Peking Gazette* of that date, translated by W. H. Medhurst.

throng of local malcontents who had banded themselves together under the designation *Piench'ien Hui* (Half-penny Association), eventually numbering about 50,000, joined the Taipings, secretly. They added to Tsêng's perplexities through the capture of many cities and the ravaging of many districts.<sup>14</sup>

In contemplating this situation Tsêng memorialised the emperor, proposing a defensive programme: concentration of his own forces at Nanchang; the occupation of T'ungch'en by Lo Tse-nan, to insure communications with Hunan and Hupeh and guard Nanchang; and the reinforcement of his forces by Cheketenpu, who was to secure the four northeastern prefectures which alone furnished revenues to the imperialists.<sup>15</sup> The emperor was utterly dissatisfied with so meager a programme and in two edicts suggested that mere reverses and numbers of the adversary were not fatal, and that Tsêng should devise measures whereby Kiangsi was not merely to be defended but delivered from the enemy. No appropriations accompanied these mandates. But provincial finances had been strengthened in Chekiang, Hupeh, and Hunan by the adoption of the *likin* tax during 1855-1856, and it was being put into effect in Ssuch'uan, Kwangtung, and Kwangsi.

One day Tsêng was surprised and delighted when P'eng Yu-ling walked into Nanchang, after having travelled in disguise and on foot all the way from Hengchow, a distance of about two hundred and fifty miles.<sup>16</sup> His accession was timely, for Tsêng, himself no gifted tactician, was particularly helpless in the face of such mandates as those from Peking, some of his best generals and naval commanders having been lost through death or separation.

<sup>14</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, *passim*.

<sup>15</sup> *Dispatches*, VI, 56-63, two dated December 29, 1855; *Nienp'u*, IV, 18.

<sup>16</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 19.

Some offensive movements were undertaken about the lake, but when Kian was besieged by rebels it was impossible to find men to send to its relief.

The ever present censors thereupon began to attack Tsêng for his poor management of Kiangsi military affairs and the emperor addressed a reproving inquiry to Tsêng. To this he replied on February 14, stating that without Lo Tse-nan and Yang Tsai-fu he was isolated in Kiangsi. His forces had been too few in the first place, and could ill afford thus to be scattered even for the defence of Hupeh. With the coming of P'eng Yu-ling he hoped later to make progress. Meanwhile he was badly hampered for lack of funds, and he could not now secure from the usual sources of revenue the 60,000 *taels* necessary to pay his little force of eleven thousand men. Rebels, by occupying most of the prefectures, had prevented the collection of the ordinary taxes, the sale of honors lagged, and the salt revenues from Chekiang were hard to secure. Having observed that the new internal trade or transit duties on goods, known as *likin*,<sup>17</sup> had proved most profitable where it had already been established, Tsêng asked that *likin* be collected at Shanghai on goods going to places where the Shanghai trade flowed, and grant

<sup>17</sup> This *likin* tax (so named from the character *li*, meaning the thousandth part of a *tael*, this tax in theory being one per mille) had first been levied in 1853 near Yangchow by a high official, Lei I-cheng, who used the proceeds to pay the soldiers he was recruiting there. His success led to the adoption of the same tax in other places. Parker, in his *China*, 1st ed., p. 227 (2d ed., p. 245), states that it was first used unsuccessfully in Shantung in 1852. He adds that about the same time Hu Lin-yi, governor of Hupeh, applied it there, after which, 1854, the viceroy of the Two Kiang adopted it east of the canal, and it was gradually extended. If it was adopted in Hupeh under Hu Lin-yi as Parker maintains, it must have been long after 1852, in which year Hu was still obscure; if actually adopted there in 1852 another governor was responsible. My information is from *Nienp'u*, II, 17a, where the credit is given as above for its first adoption. This request of Tsêng's to extend the *likin* to Kiangsu would be superfluous if, as Parker states, it had already been in effect there two years before!

him the proceeds. In the meanwhile he asked for help from the customs revenues at Shanghai.

The last named request involved too many other questions to secure a favorable response. Yet the emperor expected bricks to be made without straw, and again sent an impatient mandate ordering Tsêng to take effective steps after consultation with the governor. Tsêng's reply, March 27, was a cry of despair. Kian had fallen in the south; Chow Hung-shan, the new commander in the lake region, was proving incompetent and had lost his base, Changshu-chen. Worse than that, his defeated soldiers had fled in terror to Nanchang and there produced a panic among the populace, resulting in a great stampede, in which numbers perished;<sup>18</sup> still worse, Ch'ing-shan and Jaochow were being abandoned and their defenders retreating to Nanchang. These events required Tsêng's presence to reorganise the army of Chow Hung-shan and calm the populace. Help was looked for from Hunan, whose governor was attempting to cut a road through Liling and P'inghsiang, and another through Liuyang and Wantsai.

A further memorial, after consultation with the governor, showed that the entire eastern and southern part of Kiangsi was in rebel hands, and bandits from Kwangtung had entered Kanchow in the south, which the viceroy of the two Kwang should be asked to relieve. Lo Tse-nan, they believed, should be brought back to Kiangsi. Financial help was of the utmost necessity, and they asked for 100,000 *taels* from the customs at Shanghai, and blank patents to official rank to be sold in

<sup>18</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 23. Such panics are not uncommon among the people of a Chinese town when sudden danger threatens. They must have been of frequent occurrence in connection with most of the operations of the war. The fact that this one deserves special mention shows that it was unusually severe.

Kiangsi.<sup>19</sup> If Tsêng is condemned by censors, the emperor, or those who read of his present plight, one must remember that he had with him only about eleven thousand unpaid soldiers, and that against such resourceful commanders as Shi Ta-k'ai and Hu I-kwang, who lived largely on plunder,—a source denied him by his official status,—he was helpless without men and money. Yet his efforts in raising funds brought little response from other officials. The question of the customs raised the issue of foreign relations. The *likin* also was still a doubtful asset, and there were other claimants for the revenues of Hunan, Hupeh, Anhui, and Kiangsi. The emperor referred the requests for funds to the Board of Revenue, but with about as much actual effect as though the request had been denied. The wonder is that Tsêng did not give up the whole thing and retire.

Reinforcements, however, began to come. At the request of Tsêng's father, Hu Lin-yi sent forward four thousand Hunan troops under Tsêng Kuo-fah. News of their dispatch was brought by a messenger who carried the letter concealed in a lump of wax.<sup>20</sup> This force was held up for some time at Shuichow, but succeeded in capturing it after additional men had been sent from Hupeh, early in September.<sup>21</sup> The Taipings were supposed to be led there by the Assistant king, Shi Ta-k'ai, and Tsêng hoped to capture him in the siege, but he was too elusive.<sup>22</sup>

While these operations at Shuichow were taking place Tsêng's forces recaptured Nank'ang and Jaochow, reopening communications with Hunan and Hupeh. Yang Tsai-fu also had arrived before Kiukiang with the new Hunan flotilla<sup>23</sup> June 6. But they were rendered appre-

<sup>19</sup> *Dispatches*, VII, 13 ff. Lo Tse-nan died at Wuchang not long after this.

<sup>20</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 26b, 27.

<sup>21</sup> *Dispatches*, VII, 40-45; *Nienp'u*, IV, 31b, 32.

<sup>22</sup> *Home Letters*, V, 12a.

<sup>23</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 28.



hensive by the reports that the rebels in the four prefectures south of Nanchang were building boats in the inland rivers and creeks expecting to take advantage of the summer freshets to sail down to the attack of Nanchang. They did come eventually, only to be defeated by the flotilla.<sup>24</sup>

But these reinforcing armies called for more financial adjustments which drove Tsêng and the governor to the verge of despair. They therefore asked that the Hunan and Hupeh armies before Shuichow be paid by securing a monthly appropriation of thirty thousand *taels* from Shansi and Shensi, two northern provinces far removed from the scene of hostilities.

Now came another blow. Tsêng had gone off to inspect the army at Shuichow, when news came of a great disaster to the army laying siege to Fuchow in eastern Kiangsi. This army had sustained many attacks, having taken part in some fifty-two engagements without defeat. This city was a strategic center on which the power to hold Jaochow along the lake and Kwanghsin toward Chekiang depended; it was on the road over which supplies must pass. On the fifteenth of October the rebels from within made a sortie and, aided by relieving forces, defeated the imperialists and took their camp, throwing them into a panic. They scattered and made their way back to Nanchang, where they once more threw the provincial capital into a panic and caused great alarm in Kwanghsin and Kiench'ang in eastern Kiangsi. It therefore became necessary for Tsêng to hurry back in order to calm the populace and to take the requisite steps for defending Kwanghsin.

On the twenty-second of November Kiench'ang saw the attack upon the imperialist camp by rebels and the en-

<sup>24</sup> *Dispatches*, VIII, 1-10; *Nienp'u*, IV, 30.

forced withdrawal of the Fukien army across the border.<sup>25</sup> About the same time a reproving edict came from the emperor asking why only defeats were reported when news of victories should be coming. Inasmuch as Shi Ta-k'ai was in the province might he not be bought off and brought over to the imperialist cause? Let Tsêng therefore hasten to think out a plan, win over Shi Ta-k'ai if possible, and again report cities captured. Failure, even if not reproved or punished, must cause Tsêng and the governor to wonder how they can bear to face the people of Kiangsi.<sup>26</sup>

One or two events did happen about this time, which, though not immediately presaging victory, proved in the end of the highest importance. The first of the two events was a victory at Yuanchow, and the capture of the city, November 26. But of more importance was the second, the return of Chow Hung-shan from Hunan with more recruits, accompanied by the brother of Tsêng, Kuo-ch'üan. They won a victory at Anfu, after which they proceeded to Kian. Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan proved to have great military ability, so much so that he was eventually chosen to conduct the sieges of Anking and Nanking.<sup>27</sup>

In his reply to the emperor Tsêng patiently and tactfully met the imperial charges, carefully explaining the situation. Kanchow, to the south, was more than three hundred miles from the provincial capital and from a

<sup>25</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 37a.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*; *Dispatches*, IX, 4, 5a. This was grossly unfair. Tsêng could not have mustered more than 20,000 or 25,000 all told, to meet the clever Shi Ta-k'ai with three or four times that number. Moreover many of the Hunan forces were at Wuchang helping in the siege. The rebels were not far from their base and were living for the most part by plunder. The emperor, too, had neglected the oft-repeated calls for financial help, or could not send the money, and yet he demanded results. The emperor and the system had more to do with failure than Tsêng.

<sup>27</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 37b.

military standpoint ought to be defended from Kwangtung. The defeat at Kiench'ang was one inflicted on Fukien soldiers, whose withdrawal deprived Tsêng of forces in that direction. He was holding fast the city of Shuichow, the key to western Kiangsi, and commanding the roads into Hunan and Hupeh. Finally, Shi Ta-k'ai, whose movements Tsêng outlined for some time previous, once had the strangle hold on southern Anhui, and now had a similar hold on the prefectures of Shuichow, Lingkiang, Fuchow, Kian, and Kiukiang. If overtures were made looking to his submission, proof of the chief's sincerity would have to be exacted first by requiring the surrender of one or two of the cities he held.<sup>28</sup>

The emperor accepted these explanations with commendation. Following the advice of the governor of Hunan he also granted to the native district of Tsêng Kuo-fan, Siangsiang, the right to eighteen instead of fifteen literary graduates and fifteen in place of twelve military, a signal honor for Tsêng.<sup>29</sup> In this unusual distinction he was supposed to have ample compensation for the previous rebukes.

If the year 1856, now closing, had been one of darkness, there was nevertheless another side which was much more hopeful. Wuchang fell on December 19, 1856.<sup>30</sup> The strategic city of Shuichow was being held by Tsêng Kuo-fah; Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan was with Chow Hung-shan laying siege to Kian. The rebels were at swords' points in Nanking. It had been a year of great strain, of crisis. But reinforcements were now available. The army and navy released by the capture of Wuchang were on the way down the Yangtse and Tsêng was able to meet them out-

<sup>28</sup> *Dispatches*, VIII, 72-79; IX, 1-25, especially pages 4-7, which reply directly to the reproach.

<sup>29</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 38b.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 39a; *P'ing-ting Yuch-fai Chi-luch*, V, 20 f.

side Kiukiang, January 13, 1857. This brought four hundred boats under Yang Tsai-fu, thirty-six hundred men under Pao Ch'ao, and eight thousand under Li Shou-pin, which, added to the number at Shuichow and those directly under Tsêng Kuo-fan at or near Nanchang, made a total not far from sixty thousand, not counting those in the region of Kian and those coming from Kwangtung and Fukien.<sup>31</sup>

During the months of January and February a number of districts were captured from the rebels, though in some places they remained in strength, especially towards the Hupeh border and east of the Poyang Lake in Jaochow and Kweihsi.<sup>32</sup> At the moment when Tsêng thought that he might commence his projected campaign down the river, news came of his father's death. This required him to go into retirement, which he begged permission to do, the Hunan forces to come into control of Yang Tsai-fu and P'eng Yu-ling. Ten days after word had been received of their loss, March 16, Tsêng and his brother Kuo-fah set out for home, where they were joined by Kuo-ch'üan from Kian. The emperor granted Tsêng three months, which, however, was later extended, and approved his arrangements for the control of the army and navy. The financial arrangements were entrusted to Kwan Wen and Hu Lin-yi of Hupeh and Wen Tsen of Kiangsi.

But matters did not prosper after the Tsêngs left, and the emperor urged that Kuo-fan again take command. Tsêng, on the contrary, asked that he be allowed to prolong his leave. This was finally permitted on the express understanding that if affairs should become urgent in Kiangsi, he should be ready to set out at a moment's

<sup>31</sup> This estimate is from *Dispatches*, IX, 38a, which places the number exclusive of new arrivals at 50,000, or a total of about 60,000.

<sup>32</sup> *Nienp'u*, IV, 40b, 41a.

notice. His temporary detachment from responsibility gave him the opportunity to explain why, in his opinion, success had not yet followed his efforts.<sup>33</sup> First, though he had the rank of a cabinet officer and title of chief commander, his actual power was inferior to that of a provincial *t'ituh*. Second, all the revenues of whatever character must pass through the hands of the regular officials; being but a guest, Tsêng could not lay hands on any of these revenues and apply them to the support of his armies. Hence his never ending worry about securing needed funds. Third, he had had four different titles on his seals, all indicating high rank, but not clear enough to connote definite authority in the minds of officials or people. The commissions and orders issued under his seal did not beget suitable respect.<sup>34</sup>

During the year 1857 the Hunan and Hupeh forces in coöperation managed to drive out all the rebels from Hupeh north of the river as far as Kiukiang, and Hu Lin-yi joined in the attack of that city.<sup>35</sup> In October (the eighteenth) Huk'ow was captured and the entrance to the Poyang came definitely into the hands of the imperialists, whose lake and river flotillas now came together, having been separated since January, 1855.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 5b, 6a; *Dispatches*, IX, 33-37.

<sup>34</sup> Seal in Hunan, 1853: "Seal of the former vice president of the Board of Rites, imperially commanded to manage village troops defending against and examining rebel affairs." The next seal, adopted late in 1854, read: "Seal of the former vice president of the Board of Rites, imperially commanded to manage military matters." In February, 1855, another was used, saying: "Seal of the imperially dispatched vice president of the Board of War, former vice president of the Board of Rites." Finally he had one reading: "Seal of the junior vice president of the Board of War." In the case, for example, of appointing Chow Hung-shan, officials were sceptical about the patents issued under seals of this character.

<sup>35</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 7b.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* The former imperialist success at Huk'ow had been only temporary.

When this passage was thus cleared, Yang Tsai-fu set out on a romantic voyage through the Taiping region down the river, capturing cities as he went until he reached Anking. From thence without taking cities he continued for three hundred miles until he met ocean war junks from Tanghai. There was great surprise on these junks when they beheld the battle flags of the relatively small Hunan boats from the upper reaches of the river, for they looked on their presence so far from home as little short of miraculous. The fleet returned up the river after this feat, which was of importance because, if only for the moment, it had proved that the imperial boats were free to sail the entire length of the lower Yangtse River, through the very heart of Taipingdom.<sup>37</sup>

The operations about Kian in southern Kiangsi were long drawn out. During the summer the forces of Chow Hung-shan had suffered a defeat, in which the contingent belonging to Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan had behaved with conspicuous bravery, retiring in good order to Anfu. The governor then asked that Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan be recalled and put in active control of these operations. He arrived at Anfu towards the end of the year.

During January, 1858, Shi Ta-k'ai again entered Kiangsi, from which he had been absent for some time, and attacked Huk'ow, which, however, under the defence of Li Shou-i, resisted his efforts stubbornly. He then went through Jaochow and Fuchow hurriedly on his way to Kian, where he was met by all the available government troops and defeated at a small place called Sankütan.<sup>38</sup> This forced his retirement from the province. Ling-kiang-fu was then taken by the Hunan army, January 22, 1858, and of all western Kiangsi only Kian and Kiukiang

<sup>37</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 8.

<sup>38</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 9.

still remained in the hands of the insurgents. The road to the province of Fukien was also open.<sup>39</sup>

Outside of Kiangsi the Taiping cause did not make much headway during 1857, partly because of Shi Ta-k'ai's absence in Kiangsi and elsewhere, and partly because the leadership in Nanking was largely in the incompetent hands of the T'ienwang's family. In Anhui the rebels were extremely active, being there joined by the Nien-fei from Honan, which made it necessary to keep a large army under Imperial Commissioner Sheng Pao and General Yuan Chia-san, to hold the boundaries between Honan and Anhui. Near Nanking, also, there was some fighting which resulted in victory to the imperialists; Ho Chun capturing Yangchow on December 27, while Tehsinga captured Kwachow about the same time. The capture of Chinkiang by Chang Kuo-liang was also an achievement that brought encouragement to the loyalists.

All these successes were encouraging, to be sure. But to Tsêng Kuo-fan, about to emerge from retirement, something better now seemed necessary than the former haphazard methods of supplying the forces he led. He again assured the government how terribly each move of his had been hampered by the obstacles which confronted him at every turn, and suggested that a bureau be organised—for which he submitted a list of names—to raise the necessary supplies and money for his armies, that he might be free to give himself without other worries to purely military matters. Such a bureau should be under unified control, with branches in Hunan, Hupeh, and Kiangsi. What that organisation failed to supply

<sup>39</sup> The Hunan army referred to in this paragraph is the T'su, not the Siang Army. It was organised on the same lines. Between August 17 and September 20 it captured the long-besieged Shuichow, and thence went to Lingkiang-fu.

Tsêng would try to raise.<sup>40</sup> During the third month of 1858 permission was granted for this by the Board of Revenue. The bureau thus organised henceforth served a useful purpose, though it did not completely overcome the difficulties in the way of securing adequate support.

<sup>40</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 9b, 10a.



## CHAPTER X

### THE ADVANCE TO ANHUI

THE year 1858 was a turning point in the war. Kiangsi was being steadily conquered and the Hunan armies could soon look forward to an advance on Anking and possibly, if the outposts could be captured, to a resumption of the interrupted siege at Nanking.

Had there not been a shake-up at the Celestial Capital certain defeat would have overtaken the Taiping cause. There was no immediate sign of that defeat; their generals were practically all in the field, scattered with their hosts over Anhui, Kiangsi, and Fukien. Nevertheless their organisation and the quality of leadership in Nanking was deteriorating. Providentially there were a number of able men in subordinate positions, foremost among whom was Li Siu-ch'eng (the Chungwang), one of the men who had joined the Taiping rebellion in Kwangsi as a private, but who through sheer ability rose to the highest position in the state and became its prop at the end. He differed from Yang, the Eastern king, in that he did not share the religious delusions of that leader, depending upon good generalship and hard fighting rather than on divine inspiration. If his autobiography is to be depended on, he was singularly fearless and outspoken. At this time he came to the fore as one of the leaders of the cause.

In the first moon (February 14-March 14) 1858, the

T'ienwang, in one of the rare moments when he could be aroused to consider public affairs, issued a lengthy proclamation, recounting the usurpations of the Manchus and picturing the glorious kingdom about to be consummated if only they would stand firm. He also named seven new *wangs*, apparently just constituted. These were (1) the *Ying-wang* (heroic king), Ch'eng Yu-ch'en, a skillful general who had risen through ability; (2) the *Yu-wang* (the ready king), Hu I-kwang; (3) the *T'san-wang* (the assisting king), Mêng Teh-ên; (4) the *Fu-wang* (the protecting king), Yang Fu-ch'ing; (5) the *Chung-wang* (faithful, or loyal, king), Li Siu-ch'eng; (6) the *Shi-wang* (the attendant king), Li Shi-sien; (7) the *Chang-wang* (the polished king), Lin Shao-chang.<sup>1</sup>

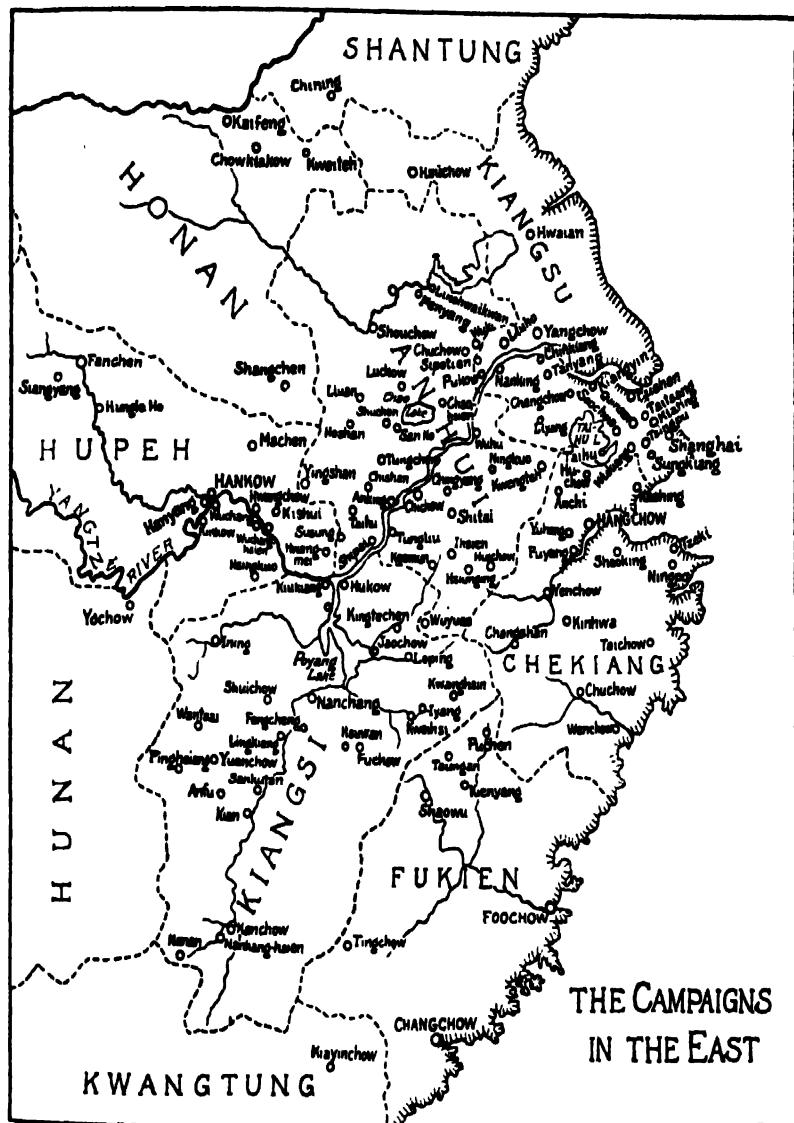
All these changes were calculated to give greater hope of Taiping success, but one source of difficulty still remained—the religious fanaticism of the T'ienwang which prevented his taking any clear-headed view of affairs or listening to good advice, leading him to rely instead on his religious formulas and his supposed divine power.<sup>2</sup>

On April 20, 1858, the theater of war was enlarged when Shi Ta-k'ai entered the province of Chekiang with an army of more than seventy thousand men. He captured a number of district cities near the Kiangsi border.<sup>3</sup> This threw that province into the utmost agitation. As something of an offset to this disaster the city of Kiukiang, which had remained in the hands of the enemy for three years, fell on May 19 before the combined as-

<sup>1</sup> *Hatsuzoku Ran Shi*, pp. 48-50. There only the surnames are given, and the full name has been supplied in every case from other sources. The Chungwang, *Autobiography*, gives 1859 as the time of these changes, but the dated document seems more trustworthy.

<sup>2</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, pp. 62 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Nienp'u, V, 11b. *Dispatches*, X, 15b, 16a, speaking of later operations, placed the number in the Yiwang's army at 70,000 to 80,000 men. Later dispatches and other references speak of as many as 200,000.





sault of the land and water forces under Yang Tsai-fu, Li Shou-pin, and P'eng Yu-ling. The wall was blown up and they entered through the breach. The slaughter of the enemy was terrible, seventeen thousand of them being put to death in the capture of the city.<sup>4</sup>

The insurgents had expected to march down both banks of the Yangtse to the relief of Nanking, which was being oppressed by the loyal troops, but were prevented by this and other reverses. In particular, the Yingwang, Ch'eng Yu-ch'en, in a raid through Anhui to Hupeh, was opposed at Mach'en, in northeastern Hupeh, by the combined forces of Sheng Pao, Hu Lin-yi, and others, and compelled to withdraw to Taihu, Anhui. This defeat forced the Chungwang to halt at Ch'uchow. He himself hurried on, but left his men with an officer at that place and they were soon compelled to retire before the imperialists. Thus none of the relieving armies got to Nanking.

In October, 1858, a council of their generals was held at Ts'ungyang, Anhui, where they agreed that the Yingwang and the Chungwang should converge on Ch'uchow. These operations were entirely successful. At Wuyi they met armies sent by Tehsinga and Sheng Pao and defeated them. At Shaotien Chang Kuo-liang was also repulsed and pursued to P'ukow, opposite Nanking, where Tehsinga was stationed. The latter was then attacked and overcome, with a loss of ten thousand men, and the rebels were once more in communication with their capital.<sup>5</sup>

But this defeat of imperial armies did not terrify the government so much as the reports from Chekiang, where Shi Ta-k'ai was running amok. General Ho Chun

<sup>4</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 11b.

<sup>5</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, VII, *passim*; Chungwang, *Autobiography*, pp. 19-22.

was too ill to move with his army from Nanking. An imperial edict received earlier in the year, on July 1, had called Tsêng Kuo-fan from his home to hasten to Chekiang. Many of his abler officers were also ordered to go there from Kiangsi.

On July 5 Tsêng made reply through the governor, Lo Ping-chang, that the number of waterways in Chekiang required the use of boats. These might be secured either through the coöperation of Yang Tsai-fu and P'eng Yu-ling, or by Tsêng's leading forces by land to Ch'angshan, where he would build a flotilla, or boats might be sent from the Yangtse to meet him, going into T'aihu and thence into Chekiang. Hunan promised 20,000 *taels* a month for the support of these forces and the emperor was requested to secure an equal amount from Hupeh, which was promised."

In accordance with the order Tsêng set out on July 17, and on the twenty-second held a conference with the governor and Tso Tsung-tang at Changsha. Orders were sent for some of his forces in Kiangsi to proceed through Fuchow into Chekiang, and he himself started down the river to Wuchang. At that place he met his friend, Hu Lin-yi, and secured his coöperation in supporting his increased army and in making certain of grain supplies. Their conference lasted in all about ten days. On the way down the Yangtse he stopped at a small place named Paho, where he met his brother, Kuo-fah, Li Shou-pin, Li Shou-yi, P'eng Yu-ling, and many other officers of lesser rank, and drew up regulations for his new command. At Kiukiang he stopped to offer worship at the temple erected to the memory of T'a Chi-pu. At Huk'ow a bureau was established for receiving and forwarding supplies, in accordance with the plan offered by Tsêng

\* Niép'u, V, 12 f. The pay of a private soldier per day was .14 of a *tael*, and of *coolies*, .10. *Ibid.*, 17a.

some time before, and placed in charge of Li Han-chang, a brother of Li Hung-chang.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, however, it became known that Shi Ta-k'ai was not taking and holding cities, but simply capturing and leaving them. All through Chekiang and Fukien he wandered. While Tsêng was proceeding from Nanchang towards Chekiang he received a mandate countermanding the earlier ones and ordering him to go into Fukien, which was now more troubled by the rebel chieftain than Chekiang. Hastily altering his plan Tsêng selected Yuan-shan, a district town at the eastern tip of Kiangsi, as his base.<sup>8</sup>

The successful termination of the long siege of Kian during the eighth moon, 1858, where dogged determination had won out, cleared Kiangsi entirely of rebels and brought no little fame to Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan, younger brother of Kuo-fan. He received promotion to the rank of *taot'ai* or intendant.<sup>9</sup> It made possible his choice for more important commands. Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan was much younger than his famous brother. As a youth he had studied for some time in his brother's home in Peking (during 1841 and 1842) but annoyed Kuo-fan by his lack of application and refusal to mend his ways.<sup>10</sup> He received his first degree in 1845.<sup>11</sup> When Tsêng's brother, Kuo-hwang, was sent home from Changsha during the trying days after Tsêng's first defeats, Tsêng, it will be recalled, ordered that none of the brothers should come again to the camp. Kuo-ch'üan had sulked over this order and remained in private life until 1856, when Hwang Mien was appointed prefect of Kian and ordered to go and capture it. Hwang Mien, on meeting Kuo-ch'üan, was so

<sup>7</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 14b, 15; *Dispatches*, X, 14-17.

<sup>8</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 16; *Dispatches*, X, 20.

<sup>9</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 18a.

<sup>10</sup> *Home Letters*, September 5, 1842.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, July 3, 1845.

impressed with his ability that he took him into his employ. The Younger Tsêng then enrolled an army of three thousand men and called his command "The Camp of Good Fortune." So important had he become that he was recalled from mourning for his father in the fifth moon, May 23-June 22, 1857, his army having been driven back from Kian to Anfu by Shi Ta-k'ai. His coming gave his men the courage to withstand an attack by that formidable adversary with nearly one hundred thousand men at Chishui-hsien in the eleventh moon.<sup>12</sup> There he was the victor, and the capture of Kian pointed to him as one of the most promising generals on the government side.

The relief to Kiangsi was but momentary. Ten thousand rebels coming over the border from Shaowu, Fukien, struck terror into the hearts of the people in the prefectures of Fuchow, Kiench'ang, Jaochow, and Kwanghsin.<sup>13</sup> Tsêng Kuo-fan hastened to Iyang and posted detachments in the surrounding regions, determined that he would not leave Kiangsi while this danger threatened. A glance at the map makes apparent the importance of this decision. From Nanchang, the capital of the province, one can proceed as along the ribs of an open fan,—north to the Poyang Lake and the Yangtse at Huk'ow, northeast through Jaochow to Nanking and the coast, almost directly east through Kwanghsin into Chekiang, southeast through Fuchow and Kiench'ang into Fukien, and south through Kian and Kanchow into Kwangtung. To the west lie the provinces of Hunan and Hupeh, reached by several roads, from which came most of the supplies of men, money, and grain for the new-model armies. Sound strategy could not permit the abandonment of this vital region to the possibility of invasion, especially in view of the fact that the invading soldiers

<sup>12</sup> *Ta Shih Chi* (Record of the Chief Events), II, 2a.

<sup>13</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 18; *Dispatches*, X, 21-23.



were from Shi Ta-k'ai's army and he himself with his main host might be just behind.

Tsêng's command now numbered about twelve thousand men, exclusive of his brother's force. By the middle of November he was able to move on to his headquarters at Kiench'ang and settle there. Incessant rains, however, prevented his sending forces over the mountain roads into Fukien, and a pestilence that broke out in the camp caused a loss of about a thousand men. Reinforcements, however, came from his brother and from Li Han-chang, which brought his strength back to the original point. Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan moved to the border of Hunan to guard his native province, and the number that actually reached Fukien was very small.<sup>14</sup>

The center of war now shifted to Anhui, where the rebels gained a noteworthy victory. The imperialists, under Li Shou-pin, had made rapid progress, capturing in succession Hwangmei, Susung, T'aihu, Kienshan, Ship'ai, T'ungch'en, and Shuch'en, and laying siege to Sanho, where Tsêng's brother Kuo-fah had joined them. But, as has already been narrated, the rebels had succeeded in driving away the imperialists from about Nanking, and were ready to push them out of western Anhui. The Yingwang was attacked by the combined Hunan forces on November 16 with every prospect of success. But just before defeat overtook the rebels, the Chungwang appeared and inflicted on the Hunanese a crushing blow which shattered them utterly. Six thousand of the best Hunan soldiers fell, Tsêng Kuo-fah being among the killed, and the commander, Li Shou-pin, committed suicide in order not to outlive the disgrace. The surviving members of the defeated army and the regulars under Tuhsinga, who had been carrying on the siege of Anking,

<sup>14</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 19 f.; *Dispatches*, X, 37-40.

alike fled into Hupeh. The defence of T'ungch'en was only perfunctory. The *débâcle* at Sanho and the consequent loss of morale greatly perturbed the Hupeh-Anhui borders.<sup>15</sup>

The Taipings followed up their victory by pouring into Kiangsi, appearing in such numbers before Kingtechen that the provincial authorities were wholly unable to cope with them.<sup>16</sup> Detachments of them also appeared in the south of that province. The governor of Hunan, Lo Ping-chang, fearing a revival of rebel activities in Hupeh from the direction of Anhui and possibly later in his own province, asked the imperial authorities to concentrate on the province of Anhui by sending Tsêng Kuo-fan there. Thus the effects of the disaster at Sanho might, to some extent, be neutralised.

Tsêng replied to the mandate that reached him by pointing out the strategic value of Wuyuan and Kingtechen, possession of which enabled the rebels freely to make raids on the four prefectures of Jaochow and Kwanghsin in Kiangsi, Huichow in southern Anhui, and Ch'üchow in Chekiang. Three regions offered difficulties unless steps were taken to guard them. One of these was Kingtechen, possession of which was essential to keep the Poyang region and Huk'ow under control. Another, most important of all, was north of Lake Ch'iao, in the region of Lüchow and Fêngyang and the Hwai River, where the Taipings and Nien-fei might come together. A third strategic region was south of Lake Ch'iao, where the rebels held several important points. Since Tsêng could not divide his forces it appeared to him best to have thirty

<sup>15</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, pp. 22 ff.; *Nienp'u*, V, 20; *Hatsusoku Ran Shi*, pp. 55 f. The latter gives the number of rebels as 180,000. *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh* says that the imperialists numbered about one-twentieth the total of the Taipings.

<sup>16</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 21b; *Dispatches*, X, 32 ff.

thousand men placed in Anhui, north of the river, under Tuhsinga, Li Shou-i, and Pao Ch'ao; twenty thousand under his command south of the river, and ten thousand led by Yang Tsai-fu and P'eng Yu-ling.<sup>17</sup> Tsêng thought that he could thus hold northern Kiangsi, leaving the governor to care for the southern portion, then fairly free from the rebels. He further advised the emperor that about three thousand Mongolian cavalry would be necessary in northern Anhui in order to cope with the Nien-fei.

With Kingtechen as the first objective under the new plan, Chang Yun-lan had already been recalled from Fukien and had gone forward during January, 1859. The imperialists were successful in a few skirmishes, but were not sufficient in numbers to take the city, and were therefore forced to wait for the coming of the P'ingkiang 'braves.'<sup>18</sup> The last of Shi Ta-k'ai's army in southern Kiangsi was driven out by the efforts of Hsiao Ch'i-kiang, who defeated the invaders at Nank'ang-hsien and Nanan in February and March. They went over into Hunan, however, thus making it necessary for the governor to recall Hsiao and his men to defend the province.<sup>19</sup>

Tsêng moved his headquarters, now that the campaign into Fukien was definitely abandoned, to Fuchow, and sent to Hunan for additional recruits, which to the number of four thousand arrived in May, followed a little later by Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan. This general then led all the available men, about 5,800, to Kingtechen. He was accompanied by Li Hung-chang. The arrival of this contingent gave the imperialists strength enough to capture the

<sup>17</sup> Memorial, February 13, 1859; *Dispatches*, X, 41-44.

<sup>18</sup> *Nienp'u*, V, 22b, VI 2b; *Dispatches*, X, 61-64.

<sup>19</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 3; *Dispatches*, X, 57-60, 69-71.

city, but only after hard fighting. It fell on July 13, 1859, and the rebels retired to Anhui.<sup>20</sup>

The presence of Shi Ta-k'ai in Hunan, where he had gone through several districts and captured Yung-chow-fu on April 11, thence proceeding to lay siege to Paok'ing, threw the province into great consternation. The officials feared that Changsha itself might be attacked before long, and with the help of the gentry began to put it into a state to withstand a siege. Rumor credited the enemy chieftain with several hundred thousand followers and asserted that his encampment stretched out for thirty miles.<sup>21</sup> From places as far distant as the Hupeh-Anhui border and from Kiangsi Hunanese were hurriedly summoned to Paok'ing; regulars, 'braves,' and country volunteers all joined the ranks.<sup>22</sup> As a climax to several battles on successive days, this improvised army joined the besieged from within the city in a concerted attack on the former rebel king and defeated him, July 26. After some hesitation as to the direction he would take, Shi Ta-k'ai withdrew into Kwangsi.<sup>23</sup>

These alarms in Hunan did not leave Tsêng's army unaffected. Many of his men were from the very region where Shi had been operating, or from near-by places, and they naturally desired to go home. Applications for leave were so numerous that strenuous measures had to

<sup>20</sup> *Dispatches*, XI, 1, 2.

<sup>21</sup> *Hatsuzoku Ran Shi*, p. 59; *P'ing-tung Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, VIII, 11b.

<sup>22</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 4b; *P'ing-tung Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, VIII, 6 ff. The estimate is made that 30,000 men there met 300,000, but one feels sceptical on that point.

<sup>23</sup> *P'ing-tung Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, VIII, 11-13, 15, 17b, 18; *Hatsuzoku Ran Shi*, p. 60. The people of this place preserve a story (characteristic of many such stories) that during the siege the apparition of a giant who sat on the wall and washed his feet in the river was instrumental in frightening the rebels and making them withdraw. That apparition was Chang Fei, a blood brother of Kwangti, god of war. A temple was erected in his honor and is there today.

be taken to prevent the Siang army from melting away completely. Equally disturbed were the officials of the province, who feared that their resourceful adversary would retreat into Ssuch'uan as he threatened to do, and there carve out an empire for himself, detaching it from the rest of China. With the Nien rebels north of them and the Taipings in the provinces to the east they feared that the Hukwang viceroyalty would be hemmed in if Shi Ta-k'ai should take Ssuch'uan. Kwan Wen, the viceroy, therefore memorialised the emperor to send Tsêng up to K'weichow-fu, just beyond the gorges, to prevent their entering Ssuch'uan.<sup>24</sup>

When the mandate ordering Tsêng to proceed to Ssuch'uan reached him, it did not appeal to him as a reasonable proposition. He replied that a great and rich province like Ssuch'uan ought to be able to raise its own forces and defend its own boundaries, also calling attention to the small following at his disposal. Mandate after mandate came, however, four of them in succession, which made it necessary for something to be done. Tsêng therefore obeyed the suggestion of these repeated orders to the extent of consulting with Kwan Wen and Hu Lin-yi, going to Hupeh for this purpose, but without moving his men away from Kiangsi.<sup>25</sup>

While he was on his way to Wuchang (having stopped at Hwangchow to consult with Hu Lin-yi), he received another mandate countermanding the instruction to go to Ssuch'uan. Nevertheless, he held his consultation with the viceroy and they came to the conclusion that Shi Ta-k'ai was not apt to go from Kweichow direct to Ssuch'uan, because of the difficulty of supporting so large a force in the mountains and of the great distance

<sup>24</sup> *Nienp'u*, XI, 6b.

<sup>25</sup> Mandates received July 28, July 31, August 2, and August 10. *Dispatches*, XI, 16-19.

between him and the rest of the Taiping rebels.<sup>26</sup> In case they should be mistaken and Shi Ta-k'ai did attempt the mountain passes into Ssuch'uan, the danger was not as imminent as that which threatened the imperialists in Anhui, where conditions from their standpoint could not be much worse. A large portion of the province was laid waste, the people had left their occupations, the fields in some parts were dried up and in others flooded, and the two imperialist armies under Ung T'ung-shu and Sheng Pao were far apart and unable to come together. The only feasible plan of campaign was to attack the province from the borders of Hupeh, according to the plans of Li Shou-pin a year earlier, plans that had failed because his men had been too few.

The details of his proposal were worked out with Hu Lin-yi on the way back from Wuchang. Two southern sections were to march near the river, the first under Tsêng through Susung and Ship'ai towards Anking, the other led by Tolunga and Pao Ch'ao to T'ungch'eng, passing through T'aihu and Chishan. Similarly two northern sections were to be organised, the first to be led by Hu Lin-yi through Yingshan and Hoshan to Shu-ch'eng, the second by Li Shao-i through Shangch'eng and Luhan to Lüchow. These plans could only be carried out in case the forces which had gone back to Hunan, those of Hsiao Ch'i-chiang and Chang Yun-lan, should be made available once more at the front.<sup>27</sup>

The divisions under Hu Lin-yi and Tsêng Kuo-fan attained their objectives in due time. Tolunga and Pao Ch'ao, in the T'aihu and Chishan region, were attacked by the Yingwang, who had effected a juncture with two chiefs of the Nien rebels, Chang Lo-hsing and Kung

<sup>26</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 10a; *Dispatches*, XI, 22-24.

<sup>27</sup> *Dispatches*, XI, 22. Tsêng also asked for leave on account of his health.

Hsia-tsu, thus putting at his disposal a hundred thousand men. Reinforcements were hurried forward from Tsêng's and Hu Lin-yi's commands and after a battle of two days, February 16 and 17, at the Hsiao-ch'i Station, Hupeh, the rebels were defeated. The generals then proceeded to capture T'aihu and Chishan and finally reached their goal.<sup>28</sup>

In the north of the province Yuan Chia-san, who had been appointed an imperial commissioner and charged with the suppression of the Nien rebels along the Hwai River, won a victory over them, gaining the Linghwei Pass and Fêngyang-hsien.<sup>29</sup> A Hunan army from Kiangsi also captured Kienchow, an old Taiping base in southern Anhui, on February 14. These various successes were most gratifying to the government and led them to hope for further conquests.

But reinforcements from Hunan did not come. Hsiao Ch'i-chiang, whose arrival was greatly desired, received a mandate ordering him to proceed to Ssuch'uan with his five thousand men, since the pressure on Anhui had been lightened. That so necessary a force should have been sent to the west at this critical moment shows how completely the emperor's advisers lived from day to day and followed a policy of improvisation. Moreover, it helps us to understand why it required so long to put down the rebellion.<sup>30</sup>

Towards the end of February appeared the fruits of an undue parsimony in sending reinforcements. A series of defeats in southern Anhui delivered six districts in Ning-

<sup>28</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 13; *P'ing-ting Yuch-fei Chi-luch*, IX, 1, 2.

<sup>29</sup> *P'ing-ting Yuch-fei Chi-luch*, IX, 3.

<sup>30</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 14a. The general impression in various authorities is that Shi Ta-k'ai was still in the region of Hunan and Kwangtung, but *Hatsusoku Ran Shi*, p. 62, states that he had already entered Ssuch'uan. This gives more point to the order.

kuo and Huichow into insurgent hands.<sup>31</sup> This opened a way from Nanking to Chekiang, over which the Taipings proceeded towards Hangchow. That wealthy city fell before the Chungwang on March 19, though the Tartar city still held out. The relieving force sent from Nanking reached the gates on the twenty-fourth and captured the city the following day, but a great conflagration destroyed a large portion of Hangchow and cost thousands of lives.<sup>32</sup> The Chungwang meanwhile hurried back to Nanking where, after a conference with the other generals, he surrounded and attacked Ho Chun and Chang Kuo-liang on March 28, forced them to retire to Tanyang, and thus again relieved the pressure on Nanking.<sup>33</sup>

This was a brilliant piece of strategy. The diverting of a large army to Hangchow, and the combined attack by all the greater Taiping generals at Nanking, gave the latter an advantage that would not have been theirs had Tsêng felt strong enough to abandon the cautious policy of proceeding only as he could drive all the enemy before him, or had the generals before Nanking not fallen into the trap prepared by the wily Chungwang through his clever feint in the direction of Hangchow. Yet the perturbation of the imperialists at the prospect of losing Chekiang was not unnatural in view of their dependence on that rich province and upon Kiangsu for most of their supplies. Moreover, they had been kept in ignorance of the overwhelming numbers of the enemy that were gathering against them.

<sup>31</sup> Nienp'u, VI, 14; *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, IX, 4-10, *passim*.

<sup>32</sup> *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, IX, 10a; *Hatsuzoku Kan Shi*, 63; Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 29. The last says that the capture was purely accidental, the purpose being only to draw men away from Nanking. When Chang Yu-liang arrived with a large army he withdrew his 1,250 men after a pretended show of force.

<sup>33</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, pp. 31 f.; *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, IX, 14.



Frenzied orders now arrived from Peking, commanding Tsêng to hasten at once to Nanking. This, however, he refused to do because of the lack of sufficient men and his unwillingness to go forward before he had captured Anking and reduced Anhui to imperial control. He recommended instead that Tso Tsung-tang be appointed to this task.<sup>84</sup> Tso was then with Tsêng Kuo-fan. During the days of Tsêng's bitter humiliation after his first defeats in 1854 he had been greatly vexed with Tso for helping Wang Hsin in the 'editing' of a memorial to the emperor after Tsêng had approved the draft. But—if common reports are true, through the intervention of Hu Lin-yi—he had come to regard him as one of the coming men, singularly clear-headed, able, and strong, and so he recommended him at this time for an important command. Without waiting for a mandate from the emperor, Tsêng held a conference with him, and it was agreed that Tso Tsung-tang should go back to Hunan and raise a new army. Not long after this Tso secured appointment to a place in the active list and began his eminent career.

Under peremptory orders from the T'ienwang—who held his family as hostages—the Chungwang now started east to capture Ch'angchow and Soochow.<sup>85</sup> His progress was a triumphal procession. First, he attacked the imperial camp at Tanyang, where the Taipings succeeded in manoeuvring their adversaries into a difficult position from which escape was well-nigh impossible. Chang Kuo-liang was drowned and ten thousand of his command perished. On learning of the disaster, Ho Chun committed suicide, leaving the army in charge of minor officers. It fell back on Ch'angchow, only in turn to abandon that place shamelessly when the Chungwang appeared there May 26. Wusih was captured on May 30 and Soochow on

<sup>84</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 16; *Dispatches*, XI, 37 f. (dated June 2).

<sup>85</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, pp. 32 f.

June 2.<sup>36</sup> Turning towards Hangchow the Chungwang then captured Wukiang and Kashing (June 5).<sup>37</sup> Chang Yu-liang there attempted to besiege him, but to no avail.<sup>38</sup> The viceroy's army fled to Shanghai—for which the viceroy was cashiered. The governor had been killed in the defence of Soochow.

Tsêng Kuo-fan received the appointment as acting viceroy of the Two Kiang with the rank of president of the Board of War, and was urged to make the recovery of the lost cities his first aim.<sup>39</sup> Earlier mandates had laid on him the burden of sending troops to Hupeh to repel a threatened invasion of the Yingwang from Anking. Tsêng, however, thought that the suggestion urging him to move his army to Shanghai was not to be entertained. In a dispatch dated June 21<sup>40</sup> he outlined his own conception of sound strategy, which, though far less spectacular, promised more permanent results. (1) Obviously without the reduction of Anking, Nanking could not be taken.<sup>41</sup> To take it, the armies now converging on it must

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33 f.; *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, IX, 16 ff. The latter does not mention the capture of Wusih, which is mentioned in *Dispatches*, XI, 44a.

<sup>37</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 35; *P'ing ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, IX, 20a.

<sup>38</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 35. Chang Yu-liang had been kept out of Hangchow and was unable to use it as a base because of the depredations of his soldiers there in March, and had to remain in the open country.

<sup>39</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 17. These orders all arrived before June 17.

<sup>40</sup> *Dispatches*, XI, 43-46a.

<sup>41</sup> It is interesting to note that on the other side the same argument was being urged on the Taipings to make them stand firm at Anking. At a gathering of the military officers in his palace at Nanking the Chungwang said: "Soochow being now our own, there is no fear of a siege from below, but if besieged from above the siege is sure to be a formidable one. The previous siege (the sixth) was by Chang Kuo-liang and Ho Chun's forces, but the seventh will be undertaken by General Tsêng and is sure to be carried on with vigor. With an able commander at the head of the army, and the [Hunan] men being inured to hardships, and in addition having

continue in their places. (2) Southern Anhui should be attacked by three armies, the first going along the river to Wuhu accompanied by boats under P'eng Yu-ling and Yang Tsai-fu, the second from Keemun, and the third from Kwanghsin. In order to carry on these operations without impairing the campaign in northern Anhui ten thousand men from Hu Lin-yi and recruits from Hunan were necessary, also support from Kiangsi, Hunan, and Hupeh. (3) The provinces of Anhui, Kiangsi, and Hupeh were open to further attacks and men must be found for their defence. In order to secure funds for these different armies Tsêng established *likin* stations all over Kiangsi and left Li Han-chang, as before, in charge of supplies.<sup>42</sup>

These plans required an addition of ten thousand men in southern Anhui. When they should arrive under Chang Yun-lan and Tso Tsung-tang, Tsêng planned to move his headquarters from Susung to Keemun. He asked for more boats on the Hwai River; at Hwai-an on the Grand Canal; also reinforcements on the Yangtse and on the lakes south of the river, with bases at T'ungch'eng and Ningkuo, respectively. The Hwai fleet was necessary to insure the grain and salt supply from that region, while the one in southern Anhui would be necessary because of the network of waterways in the level land about T'aihu.<sup>43</sup>

always been victorious without one defeat, they are sure to conduct any siege with characteristic energy. As long as Ngan hui [i.e., the capital, Anking] is secure no anxiety need be felt, but if that city gives way then it will be impossible to protect the capital: let each of you use your exertions to furnish the place with provisions." *Autobiography*, p. 37. The Kanwang held the same idea. In warning the Chungwang against regarding the east too highly he says: "Let me tell you that the great river may be likened to a snake, the head of which is formed by Hupeh, the body by Kiangnan. Hupeh not being ours, the moment Nganking is lost the snake is divided: and though the tail may survive, it can only enjoy a transitory existence." *Sketch*, p. 7.

<sup>42</sup> *Dispatches*, XI, 50 f.; *Nienp'u*, VI, 18.

<sup>43</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 10a; *Dispatches*, XI, 58-61.

According to his plan, Tsêng moved to Keemun, arriving there July 28, 1860. While he was busily engaged in his multifarious duties, civil and military, Kiangsu and Chekiang continued to be overrun by the Taipings under the Chungwang, while from Fukien came the report of invasion.<sup>44</sup> Ningkuo, to the south of Nanking and one of its most vital outposts, remained in imperialist hands but was in momentary danger of falling. Chang Yu-liang was cashiered for failure and Tsêng Kuo-fan was ordered to assume the office of imperial commissioner in Kiangnan and proceed to the relief of Chekiang.<sup>45</sup>

In his reply Tsêng pointed out the obvious fact that he was unable to leave Anking behind him until it was captured. Even though Hangchow and the province of Chekiang were in danger Tsêng could not go in person to their rescue. Indeed, his forces scarcely sufficed for holding southern Anhui and Kiangsi. Naturally his first duty was to the districts he then held. Since he could not then abandon Keemun he recommended for the governorship of Kiangsu (together with the control of the river forces on the Hwai River) Li Hung-chang, who then held the official rank of *taot'ai* and had proved that he was capable, level-headed, and useful. Pending imperial confirmation Tsêng appointed him temporarily to this post.<sup>46</sup> Thus Li Hung-chang, until then one of the minor actors in the drama, stepped into the limelight. His province was the very one where he would be under the constant observation of and in constant relations with foreigners of Shanghai; this made him more conspicuous than any other high official outside Peking, far more so in foreign eyes than the Tsêngs. The added fact that he continued

<sup>44</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 10a.

<sup>45</sup> Mandate received August 10. *Nienp'u*, VI, 24.

<sup>46</sup> Li Ung-bing, *Outlines of Chinese History*, states erroneously that Tsêng first bethought himself of Li Hung-chang after the fall of Anking.

to hold high positions for forty years, during many stirring events, kept him in the eyes of mankind long after the other great men of this time had passed off the scene and been well-nigh forgotten.

The War Office frantically urged Tsêng to send Tso Tsung-tang and others through Chekiang to effect the recapture of Soochow and Ch'angchow, for the way was now open to the rebels to press north as well as to overrun these coast provinces. To explain the urgent nature of the mandates now showered upon Tsêng (not fewer than four reaching him between August 31 and September 8), urging him to go to Kiangsu and Chekiang, we must recall that this was the year in which the British and French were fighting their way to Peking. They had landed August 2, 1860, defeated the Mongolian tribesmen under Senkolintsin August 12, and were slowly but steadily pushing on towards Peking, which they reached in October. In those days of stress and fear after the defeat of Senkolintsin these orders came to Tsêng, for the imperial court feared—and not without some basis of truth—that the Taiping rebels might take advantage of the foreign war to press on to the north. In fact, the Chungwang had received orders from the T'ienwang to do this very thing and sweep away the Manchus altogether, but demurred because of his own plans to go to Kiangsi to secure large numbers of recruits. He was reprimanded in consequence.<sup>47</sup>

On the other side, Tsêng could not be hustled off into the province of Chekiang. Between his army and Chekiang lay the two important prefectural cities of Ningkuo and Kwangteh, both of strategic importance in the de-

<sup>47</sup> The advice was so sound that one wonders who stirred up the T'ienwang, or why the Chungwang, shrewd as he was, rejected it. Probably he feared that if he started north Tsêng would at once move on Nanking, capture it, and leave him without a base.

fence of Nanking, and he did not have enough men to capture them, to say nothing of going into the two great coast provinces beyond.<sup>48</sup> The best he could do at the moment was to send twelve thousand men to the rescue of the imperilled Ningkuo, under the command of Chang Yun-lan, Sung Kuo-yung, and Li Yuan-tu. Tso Tsung-tang, who might otherwise have gone with them, had been delayed by a mandate ordering him to proceed into Ssuch'uan, but Tsêng finally succeeded in having it changed so that Tso could join him in Anhui.<sup>49</sup>

Before Tsêng's reinforcements could reach them Ningkuo had fallen (September 2, 1860). The Yingwang and Shiwang then attacked Li Yuan-tu in Huichow and captured that place October 9. This made it possible for them to extend their power almost to Tsêng's base at Keemun. Another urgent mandate to go to the rescue of Shanghai, Sungkiang, and Chinkiang, all of which had been attacked, afforded Tsêng another chance to consider and set forth his circumstances and immediate plans.<sup>50</sup> South of the Yangtse he had three armies. The first was under Tso Tsung-tang at Lop'ing, with instructions to move northward or eastward according to the direction in which the rebels should appear; the second and third under Pao Ch'ao and Chang Yun-lan at Hsiuning. So long as these armies kept near each other they were sufficient, but if separated danger of loss would ensue. Until Anhui was pacified there was no way to abandon his position and go to the coast. Here again is a statement of the familiar policy, firm and unwavering, which Tsêng clung to persistently throughout his military career. Though nearly eight years had passed since first he set out to relieve Nanking, the goal was still distant, because he would

<sup>48</sup> *Dispatches*, XII, 9-12; *Nienp'u*, VI, 27.

<sup>49</sup> *Dispatches*, XII, 18-20; *Nienp'u*, VI, 28.

<sup>50</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 31b; *Dispatches*, XII, 40-43.

not move from one position until the area behind him was safe. This policy had kept him in Nanchang for many dangerous and tedious months while Kiangsi was overrun, but it resulted in his finally securing the requisite numbers of new levies. It now held him at Keemun in the same way, for despite the fact that there were larger armies under him now, both north and south of the river, they could no more be broken into small divisions and hurried hither and thither to meet sudden emergencies than they could in earlier crises. For if they were to be dispatched to various places where rebels had appeared or were threatening to appear, the Taipings would be able, unopposed, to march to their rear and seize and hold the provinces of Kiangsi, Hupch, and Hunan, which formed the military and economic heart of the nation. At all costs these three provinces must be held, for, in the imagery of the Kanwang, they formed the head of the serpent and the rich coast provinces the tail; the head must be preserved, whatever the fate of the tail. If Tsêng moved from above Anking to the coast he felt that it would be an invitation for the Taipings to move from Nanking up the river and settle themselves above the imperialists, thus occupying the most strategic portion of the country.

As the authorities at Peking had each time accepted the reasoning of Tsêng, realising its soundness, so they did now. Nevertheless, their support of his policy was to be subjected to the test of disaster before it eventually justified itself, for Ihsien was captured by the rebels on December 1. They were driven from this place the following day by Pao Ch'ao and Chang Yun-lan, but the success was only temporary.<sup>51</sup> On December 15 Kienteh and Tungliu fell into enemy hands,<sup>52</sup> and gradually they sur-

<sup>51</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 32a.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 32b.

rounded Keemun, despite the faithful attempts of the coöperating generals and armies to prevent.

By the end of the month Keemun was isolated. To the west the insurgents occupied the territory as far as King-techen, to the south the Chungwang himself had taken Wuyuan and from thence spread south to Yushan. To the north they had come across the mountains almost up to Tsêng's camp.<sup>53</sup> For the space of two weeks Keemun and Tsêng Kuo-fan and the whole imperial cause were in the gravest danger. Communications were practically severed, although by dint of great exertion by the combined force of Tso Tsung-tang and Pao Ch'ao the road was kept open enough for supplies to pass over it from King-techen to Keemun. Little by little these two generals won strategic points, until they had relieved the pressure on Keemun and saved the illustrious commander-in-chief.<sup>54</sup> During this period of danger, when he was being advised to move back into Kiangsi, Tsêng utterly refused to do so lest he should cause a serious loss of morale among his troops. His steadfastness during this crisis and his coolness in the face of almost certain capture and death proved to be an object lesson of great value.<sup>55</sup>

Keemun was not the only place where matters were going wrong. Rebels from Kwangtung were entering southern Kiangsi, while on the Yangtse there was danger at Huk'ow, which was guarded by P'eng Yu-ling. Other places were also captured or threatened. Thus not Anhui alone, but Kiangsi as well, was one of the theaters of war. And finally, the rebels were trying desperately to bring help to Anking, the Chungwang having solemnly warned the defenders that they must hold it at all costs.<sup>56</sup> But if

<sup>53</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 34a; *Dispatches*, XII, 75.

<sup>54</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 34-36, *passim*.

<sup>55</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, 35b.

<sup>56</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 37. In his dispatch (XII, 69) Tsêng intimates that the rescue of Anking was the objective of the Chungwang and the other rebel chiefs who were pressing on him.



they hoped by these sundry attacks in all directions to effect the recall of any of the forces investing Anking they were disappointed. Instead of bringing reinforcements from Anking, Tsêng preferred to hold his post with his small force and let the siege go on. Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan, who had gone there as commander, successfully beat off the Taipings who came to raise the siege.

Thus the end of 1860 and the first month of the following year found the imperial cause in grave peril. The Taipings had been subjected to a similar danger twelve months before, but the brilliant exploits of the Chung-wang had reopened to them some of the regions from which they had been expelled in the slow, steady progress of Tsêng Kuo-fan and his fellows in Hupeh and Kiangsi, besides opening the way into the almost untapped provinces of Kiangsu, Chekiang, and Fukien. Through the intervention of foreigners at Shanghai when the Chung-wang approached, they had, however, been kept out of that thriving seaport.

While Tsêng was shut up in Keemun the first suggestion of foreign intervention came. In confidence, the proposals of the Russian envoy, Ignatieff, were transmitted from Peking to secure Tsêng's comments. These proposals were that the Russians place at the disposal of the Chinese government a naval force of three or four hundred men to coöperate with the Chinese army in capturing Nanking; also that vessels flying American and Russian flags be used, in coöperation with American and Chinese merchants at Shanghai, in transporting tribute rice to Peking, the usual route by the Grand Canal being subject to interference at the hands of the enemy.

In his reply to the query Tsêng does not directly oppose the plan, but suggests that it is premature to consider such a course when the land forces are so inadequate, and the water forces already exist in practically sufficient

numbers. After Chekiang and Anhui, together with the captured places in Kiangsu, are recovered, foreigners might conceivably be used in the final attack on Nanking. But if such an innovation were to be made everything ought to be specified in the minutest detail—the numbers of ships and men, the exact payments to be made and supplies to be furnished. As to the transport of rice by sea in foreign vessels, Tsêng was more willing, but in that case also the contracts made with the Americans must be clear and explicit.<sup>57</sup>

This reply affords us a slight insight into Tsêng's reputed anti-foreign tendencies. It is not unreasonable prejudice against foreigners as such that actuates him in his apparent unwillingness to make use of them, but rather a consideration for the honor of China. This we shall have occasion to confirm in later incidents. Although Tsêng had had practically no direct dealings with foreigners hitherto, he had nevertheless reached some conclusions regarding them from accounts given him by other officials. England he regarded as the most deceitful of all Western nations, France next. Russia was reputed to be the strongest of the European nations, with which England feared to quarrel. America was of a complaisant disposition as regards China, a fact proved at the time of the Opium War and at other times. Whoever gave Tsêng the information that led to this observation, it shows that among the Chinese administrators of that day the Westerners were by no means classed together as 'barbarians,' but were studied with at least some attempt to understand their different tendencies.

Incidentally it is an interesting speculation whether this Russian offer to aid China—even though the help proffered was not great—did not have something to do with the change of front which led the Allies, almost im-

<sup>57</sup> *Dispatches*, XII, 55-58.

mediately after their successes in war, to turn around and give active and open help to the imperial government, whereas they had hitherto maintained a scrupulous neutrality.<sup>58</sup> The usual explanation is that the commercial motive, alone or chiefly, determined the change in policy, anxiety, that is, to secure the river trade opened by the new treaties. While that is doubtless one of the strong factors, it seems possible that the Russian offer, if it was known to the British representative, would have furnished an even more powerful political motive, namely, a desire to prevent the Russians from securing the Yangtse trade which Great Britain regarded chiefly as her prerogative. From now on, at any rate, little or no opposition is registered against the foreign adventurers who were helping the imperialists in the interior near Shanghai. Some of these the Chungwang had encountered first at Tsingpu, apparently just after his capture of Soochow, and frequently thereafter he met them.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>58</sup> This had been greatly stressed in 1853 when the British visited Nanking. Meadows, p. 265, inserts a letter of Bonham, assuring the rebels that the British were forbidden to break neutrality.

<sup>59</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 35 and *passim*. But prior to that Ward had already made a name by the capture of Sungkiang with a few daring men, July 17, 1860. Morse, *International Relations*, II, 70.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE CAPTURE OF ANKING AND REORGANISATION OF THE WAR

At the beginning of 1861 the Taipings were in a strong position. Four great armies were in the field, exclusive of the host led by Shi Ta-k'ai. The Yingwang was in Hupeh, the Chungwang in southern Anhui, where the Shiwang had just effected a junction with him at Hui-chow, and the two were threatening the imperialists at Anking. The Kanwang had gone to Hunan to recruit those who were coming to join the cause from Kwangtung, Kwangsi, and Kweichow.<sup>1</sup> They held the most of Kiangsu and were already intrenched in, or about to make inroads into, Chekiang and Fukien.

The loyalists were practically on the defensive. Tsêng Kuo-fan was in Keemun, his brother, Kuo-ch'üan, outside the walls of Anking. Hu Lin-yi with the northern division of Hupeh troops faced the Yingwang near the Hupeh-Anhui border, and Tso Tsung-tang and Pao Ch'ao were not far from Kingtechen.<sup>2</sup>

The last-named generals were able, during the early part of the year, to free northern Kiangsi once more, particularly the prefectures of Jaochow and Kiukiang. But in western Anhui the imperialists were defeated by

<sup>1</sup> Lindley, *Ti-Ping Tien-Kuo*, p. 326. Lindley was with the insurgents at this time and should have known their approximate disposition. See *Dispatches*, XII, 69 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Nienp'u*, VI, last pages, and VII, 1.

the Yingwang at Hoshan, and this opened the way for him to go through Hupeh, taking the cities of Ch'i-shui, Hwangchow, Teian, and Shuichow. In southeastern Kiangsi, likewise, many rebels were still at large. Tsêng, therefore, refused to permit Pao Ch'ao to go to Hupeh, but transferred him to Nanchang, where he could ward off the threat upon Fuchow and Kienchang.<sup>3</sup>

Tso Tsung-tang left his base, Kingtechen, to advance to Lop'ing, and the rebels moved up and captured Kingtechen on April 9. As yet ignorant of this loss, Tsêng on the tenth moved from Keemun to Hsiuning, whence his forces unsuccessfully launched an attack on Huichow on April 16. Tsêng was in great peril now, for he held only the three district towns of Keemun, Ihsien, and Hsiuning, and was cut off from his supplies. On April 22 he again made a futile attempt to go forward.<sup>4</sup> But Tso Tsung-tang soon managed to drive off the Shiwang and open the grain roads once more.<sup>5</sup> The Taipings were evidently trying to distract the imperialists from the siege of Anking by attacking here and there at widely separated points, tactics intended to frighten their enemies but only annoying them.

The Yingwang was at this time returning from his raid into Hupeh, intending to attack the besieging army at Anking,<sup>6</sup> which, notwithstanding the various attempted

<sup>3</sup> Nienp'u, VII, 1; *Dispatches*, XIII, 31 (March 27).

<sup>4</sup> Nienp'u, VII, 3b.

<sup>5</sup> Nienp'u, VII, 3b, 4a; *Dispatches*, XIII, 36-44 (May 3).

<sup>6</sup> Sir Harry Parkes believed that he was the instrument of turning the Yingwang from his contemplated attack on the Wuhan cities. Meeting him at Hwangchow, soon after the capture of that city on February 18, he was informed that the Yingwang felt himself in a position either to draw imperialists off from Anking (he actually writes Nanking, but that may be a misprint or a slip of the pen) or move on Hankow. He added that the Yingwang expressed a little hesitation about attacking a place which the British had just opened up. Parkes says of this: "I commended his caution in this respect, and advised him not to think of moving upon Hankow,

diversions under the four *wangs* (and Shi Ta-k'ai, if he could still be reckoned as of their number), remained unshaken. Tsêng's peculiar gift is shown under these difficulties. He had no brilliant strategy to oppose to the Chungwang, but he did keep his head and refuse to recall the besiegers from Anking, which was steadily weakening as he could see from the desperate attempts to draw its besiegers away. Possession of that place was as necessary for him as its loss was dreaded by the Taipings. He likewise realised that he must defend Kiangsi and the provinces of Hupeh and Hunan behind him—his sources of men, money, and munitions. If we are disposed to complain of the exasperating delays resulting from his stubborn adherence to a few fixed ideas and condemn the relative rigidity of his strategy, we must recall the fact that he did not command the resources of a strong central government, but was the victim of decentralisation and of the apathy or resistance of the established officials to his innovations. He cannot be judged by the standards of some other land or age, but by the conditions as he found them. And by these standards he towers above all the men of his day, imperialist and insurgent alike, in his ability to shoulder responsibility and go forward with

as it was impossible for the insurgents to occupy any emporium at which we were established without seriously interfering with our commerce, and it was necessary that their movements should be so ordered as not to clash with ours. In this principle he readily acquiesced and said that two of his leaders who had already pushed beyond Hwangchow should be directed to take a northerly or northwesterly course and go towards Ma-ching or Tihngan instead of towards Hankow."

Whether this acquiescence resulted from politeness or from policy is a point capable of dispute. Parkes adds that the Yingwang suggested joint occupation, he taking Hanyang and the British Hankow and Wuchang. Hanyang with its high hill dominates the other two places, at least in modern warfare, and one can scarcely believe that there was much delicacy of feeling with regard to British commerce, though there might have been fear of the British themselves. *Life of Sir Harry Parkes*, I, 430 ff. (from a letter to his wife).

unflinching determination and stubborn will to final victory.

He even increased the danger in which he stood, when, late in April, he ordered Pao Ch'ao to hasten to the relief of Tolunga in the region of T'ungch'en and Hwai-ning, outposts of Anking. Early in May he set out with a few hundred guards for the outskirts of Anking, leaving behind him Chang Yun-lan to attack Hsiuning, and Chu P'in-lung to guard Keemun. While he was with Pao Ch'ao's army at Tungliu, the Yingwang made an attack on the imperialists outside Anking, but was repulsed by Yang Tsai-fu from the river, Tolunga in the outposts, and Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan outside the city walls.

At the same time Tso Tsung-tang, advancing from Kingtechen, had driven the rebels under the command of the Shiwang through Kwanghsin into Chekiang, where they captured Kihwa, an important prefectural city almost due south from Hangchow. To offset this the Chungwang, early in June, started from his base at Juichow, ravished a number of districts in Kiangsi and went on over the border into Hupeh, where he carried destruction over the countryside in the districts of Hsingkuo, Tayeh, Tungshan, and Ts'ungyang, whither the governor, Hu Lin-yi, was compelled to send a force against him.<sup>7</sup> Other activities of the rebels were easily checked.

All the efforts of the Taiping *wangs* to divert the imperialists from the siege of Anking failed, and Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan persistently increased the severity of the pressure on them. He knew through intercepted letters that the plight of the defenders was serious. They were almost out of provisions, and a final struggle must soon take place unless swift relief should come to them.<sup>8</sup> The siege might have ended earlier, had it not been for the

<sup>7</sup> *Nienp'u*, VII, 6a; *Dispatches*, XIII, 68.

<sup>8</sup> *Dispatches*, XIII, 68.

aid the insurgents received from the foreign steamers which were now coming regularly up the river.<sup>9</sup> By the eighth of July the outer defences of the city had all been reduced, whilst Tso Tsung-tang in Kiangsi, Pao Ch'ao to the south, and Hu Lin-yi to the west, were barring the way to the forces of the Shiwang, the Chungwang, and the Yingwang.<sup>10</sup>

An imperial mandate, in answer to appeals from Chekiang, ordered Tso Tsung-tang to Chekiang, but Tsêng ventured to disregard it, arguing that the rebels from Chekiang who had returned to the Poyang region of Kiangsi were being held in check by General Tso alone. At this critical stage in the siege of Anking, Tso's removal would destroy the most vital point in the structure of defence. He could not spare men because he and Chang Yun-lan were left alone to take responsibility for the whole area from Jaochow eastward through Keemun to Huichow, Anhui, and southeastward to Kwanghsin. The moment he parted with any of his all too meager forces he would lack the strength to defend this supremely strategic area. On the same day, for similar reasons he set aside another mandate calling for the transfer of P'eng Yu-ling to Kwangtung as provincial judge.<sup>11</sup>

In a last desperate effort to save Anking the Chungwang marched to Nanchang, hoping to draw men away from Anking through fear of losing Kiangsi's capital. One of the complacent censors now gave the Chungwang aid by reciting the points of danger in Kiangsi, actual or threatened, and urging that Tsêng be compelled to take suitable steps to defend that province. It became necessary for Tsêng to send in a counter memorial in which he detailed the various rebel invasions and the steps he had taken to counter them. The censorship had

<sup>9</sup> *Home Letters*, June 2 and 4, 1861.      <sup>10</sup> *Nienp'u*, VII, 7b, 8a.

<sup>11</sup> *Nienp'u*, VII, 8; *Dispatches*, XIII, 72-75.



points of usefulness, but in delicate and dangerous situations like these their childishness and misunderstanding did more harm by far than good.<sup>12</sup> By good fortune the Chungwang, during August, moved to Shuichow, and Pao Ch'ao went to attack him. The Chungwang was pursued as far as Fêngch'eng and there met defeat in battle August 29, making it necessary to retreat to Fuchow, and from thence out of the province.<sup>13</sup>

This was the final attempt to relieve Anking, which fell, after nearly two years of siege, September 5, 1861. The same evening Tsêng wrote to his brother:<sup>14</sup>

Koh Shing has arrived and I have received the joyous message and learned that today at the Mao hour (5-7 a.m.) Anking was re-taken. Opportunely it happens that the sun and moon rise together and the five planets are strung together. The Board of Astronomy memorialised the Throne in the fifth moon that it portended unusual fortune. Anking's capture duly fulfills this. There is probable hope for the nation's renewal. Just now the silver at hand does not amount to quite six thousand taels. I should like to distribute ten thousand taels in rewards to the officers and men. Can my brother find some way to arrange for the needed four thousand there?

Two days later T'ungch'eng was captured by Tolunga, and on the ninth Ch'ichow by Yang Tsai-fu's water forces.<sup>15</sup> Hupeh and Kiangsi were now quickly pacified and the retreating rebels were thrown back into the three provinces they controlled, Anhui, Kiangsu, and Chekiang. To those captured at Anking and T'ungch'eng death was meted out, some twenty thousand being massacred at Anking and half that number at T'ungch'eng.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Dispatches*, XIV, 1-4.

<sup>13</sup> *Nienp'u*, VII, 9b, 11a.

<sup>14</sup> *Home Letters*, September 5, 1861. The Chinese always regarded the grouping of sun, moon and the five planets as a fortunate omen, and note such occurrences in their annals and histories.

<sup>15</sup> *Nienp'u*, VII, 10; *Dispatches*, XIV, 18 ff.

<sup>16</sup> *Ta Shih Chi*, II, 6a.

The exultation with which the capture of Anking filled Tsêng's heart was offset by news of the death of Hu Lin-yi, governor of Hupeh and Tsêng's faithful friend and powerful support in the trials of the past seven years. He had depended in no small measure on the eminent services and wise counsels of this able man, whom some rank as Tsêng's equal in all respects. During the same month the emperor also passed away.

Many were the honors distributed among the successful leaders about Anking. Li Shou-i received appointment to the governorship of Hupeh in place of Hu Lin-yi, and P'eng Yu-ling became governor of Anhui. Pao Ch'ao, originally of the military service, now received a full generalship. Chang Yun-lan was appointed provincial judge in Fukien, but was eventually permitted to remain with Tsêng, who could ill spare him. To Tsêng himself was awarded the title "Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent." Kuo-ch'üan was given the title of provincial judge with rank as provincial treasurer, and the right to wear a yellow jacket. Their younger brother was promoted to the rank of a magistrate in an independent sub-prefecture without examination and the right to wear a one-eyed peacock feather. The brother who had fallen at San-Ho was granted the rare honor, for one so young, of a posthumous name, Chung-lieh.<sup>17</sup>

Anking now became the base of operations for the imperialists and the headquarters of Tsêng Kuo-fan. Five great strategic centers remained in Taiping hands: Wuhu and Nanking along the Yangtse, Lüchow in central Anhui north of Anking, Ningkuo to the south of Nanking and a key to that city as well as to the province of Chekiang, and Soochow, the capital of Kiangsu.<sup>18</sup>

Not long after the fall of Anking, Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan

<sup>17</sup> *Nienp'u*, VII, 11b, 12.

<sup>18</sup> *Dispatches*, XIV, 9-11 (August 23, 1861).

with about twenty thousand men started down the river in the direction of Nanking, but feeling that he was not strong enough to take that great Taiping center, he returned to Anking, where he secured permission to return to Hunan to recruit an additional six thousand men. During his absence on this errand the redoubtable Chungwang again made a raid in Chekiang in October and managed to extend the insurgent power by the capture of the important cities of Shaohsing and Chuchow. The danger of again losing Hangehow was very great. Indeed, this entire region was a source of supplies of grain to the imperial side which they could ill afford to lose and Tsêng was moved at once to send Tso Tsung-tang to Chekiang.<sup>19</sup>

The unchecked ravages of the Chungwang became so alarming to the people of Chekiang and Kiangsu that a delegation from the officials and gentry of Shanghai arrived in Anking by steamer on November 18, 1861, "begging with tears" that the viceroy send them aid. They reasoned that Kiangsu had abundance of man power in their militia, that weapons and boats were available, and that internal communication by the numberless waterways was particularly good. There was imminent danger of losing it all, for at the moment only three important cities in that region were still in imperialist hands, Chin-kiang and Shanghai in Kiangsu, and Huchow in northern Chekiang.

Tsêng told them that an immediate campaign was an impossibility there, but that in the spring of 1862 Li Hung-chang, whom he had already recommended as governor of the province of Kiangsu, would be ready with the army he was recruiting and training in Anhui, and would probably be sent to their aid.<sup>20</sup> Through the necessities brought about by these new complications, Tsêng eventually adopted the plan of establishing three military

<sup>19</sup> *Nienp'u*, VII, 14b.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 15a.

areas, in which the objective should be to surround the rebels on all sides and gradually close in on Nanking, which should be besieged by his brother, Kuo-ch'üan.<sup>21</sup> These three areas were Chekiang under Tso Tsung-tang, Kiangsu under Li Hung-chang, operating from Shanghai with Soochow as his objective, and eastern Kiangsi and Anhui under his own command. Tso Tsung-tang had already set out for Chekiang.

Meanwhile, on November 20, Tsêng received an imperial mandate conferring on him the supreme military command of the four provinces Kiangsu, Anhui, Kiangsi, and Chekiang, whose governors and other officials must obey his orders. Tso Tsung-tang was to hasten to Chekiang. In the modest disclaimer required by etiquette, Tsêng pointed out that his apparent successes at Anking had been due in large measure to the aid received from Hu Lin-yi and Tolunga, and that at the present moment he was far from being able to send the needed forces to Shanghai, and was in no manner fit to assume the supreme direction of operations in four provinces. He prayed that Tso Tsung-tang be granted full power in Chekiang.<sup>22</sup>

While this message was being written, affairs were going from bad to worse in the last-named province.<sup>23</sup> The Chungwang and the Shiwang were both there, and there is reason to believe that they had foreign officers in their employ who may have had something to do with conspicuous successes, as they probably did with the adoption by the Chungwang in the following year of foreign rifles which wrought such havoc to the armies of the younger General Tsêng at Nanking.<sup>24</sup> They captured Tai-

<sup>21</sup> Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan had had the chance to go to Shanghai, but preferred to be stationed at Nanking.

<sup>22</sup> *Dispatches*, XIV, 59-63.

<sup>23</sup> *Tai ping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, XIII, 13.

<sup>24</sup> A letter of Tsêng to his brother, June 5, 1861, mentions the fact that Lo Ta-kang had three "foreign devils" with him and that now the Chung-

chow and went on to Hangchow, the capital, which fell before them on December 29, 1861. Their armies also went to the important city of Ningkuo, which they held for a time until they were driven back to Chekiang early in 1862. Tso Tsung-tang received the definitive appointment as governor of Chekiang, but the emperor still insisted that Tsêng should accept the control of the four provinces, which, however, Tsêng was very unwilling to do because of the jealousies that would undoubtedly be engendered by so great a departure from the general practice.<sup>25</sup>

On the civil side Tsêng gave himself to the pleasant task of repairing the provincial academy and restoring the examinations. He also reorganised the provincial revenues by reassessing the fields, separating those of poorer grade from the others, and levying a war tax of 400 cash per *mow* on the better grades. He also set up a factory for manufacturing munitions of war.<sup>26</sup>

The officials and gentry of Shanghai were considering the employment of foreign soldiers to help recover interior points. Tsêng, on being questioned, first by the gentry and then by the imperial court, expressed his view that justification might be found for employing foreigners at Shanghai and Ningpo, since these were treaty ports where foreigners might be regarded in a sense as defending their own interests. At Soochow, Ch'angchow, and Nanking, interior cities, the case was different. If in those

wang and Shiwang both had them at their sides. He wanted Kuo-ch'üan to find out whether these men were reliable men or not, and under what understandings they were employed.

<sup>25</sup> *Nienp'u*, VII, 19b, VIII, 1. The province of Chekiang was in the jurisdiction of the viceroy of Min-Che, who also governed Fukien. From a military standpoint it was undoubtedly wiser for Tsêng to have this province under control, but it would at once make him more powerful than any other viceroy had ever been.

<sup>26</sup> *Nienp'u*, VII, 20.

places the Chinese should bring in foreign aid and be defeated they would become a laughing-stock to the world; if, on the contrary, they should be victorious one could not foretell what complications or disputes might arise. Even in the case of the treaty ports a careful understanding must be reached beforehand.

In February, 1862, the matter again came to Tsêng's attention when word reached him that the authorities at Shanghai had arranged with England and France for the defence of Shanghai, with the probability that the foreign soldiers would later be used to retake Soochow. This *fait accompli* did not remove the uneasiness from Tsêng's mind, because, as he made clear to the emperor, unless such foreign soldiers were inclined to virtue they might become a danger within the state, not content after the war to disband quietly with the gratitude of those whom they had delivered, but insisting on staying to seize a share in China's inheritance.<sup>27</sup>

Still again the question was raised when the gentry of Kiangsu and Chekiang sent a delegation to Peking to urge that the proffered aid from the British and French be accepted. The foreign ministers had similarly received petitions from their nationals asking that the neutrality heretofore observed give place to a policy of direct intervention. The imperial thought wavered between suspicion of the foreign motives and inclination to grant the petitions of the gentry in the distracted provinces. The opinion of Tsêng Kuo-fan and Tuhsinga was desired after they should have made an investigation of the facts in the case.

For the third time Tsêng took exactly the same ground he had previously taken. If foreign soldiers, with comparatively slight Chinese aid, were now to drive out the rebels from those provinces, the guest-soldiers, outnumber-

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 3b, 4; *Dispatches*, XV, 19, 20 (March 11).

bering their hosts, could work their will in the land. The forces of Tolunga, Pao Ch'ao, and Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan above Nanking, and the newly recruited army of Li Hung-chang which was about to be sent to Shanghai, could not spare the necessary men to organise a sufficient Chinese force to coöperate with the foreigners in the immediate attack on Soochow, Ch'angchow, and Nanking. The Chinese would therefore be placed in the plight of a man who could do nothing but write polite notes and must hire a champion to go out and fight his battles. Only in this case it would be worse, for they would neither be able to write the notes or to fight, and could simply become a laughing-stock far and near. Since the enemy on their part were also hesitating whether to use foreigners in any numbers—although it was believed that the Taiping pretender, Hung Siu-ch'üan, hated them—prudence would dictate that the imperial government should likewise be careful in the matter, and make temporising replies, neither refusing nor accepting the foreign help, but continuing the conversations while they pressed on. For the moment the Tsungli Yamen might intimate that Tsêng had too few men to permit of his detaching any to coöperate with the foreigners, but after the campaign against Wuhu and the Two Pillars<sup>28</sup> their aid might be invoked.<sup>29</sup>

We must not infer from these several messages of ill-concealed opposition to the policy of employing foreigners under any circumstances that Tsêng had no interest in the province of Kiangsu, or that he underrated the importance of Shanghai. In many of his letters home he mentions the place and his great anxiety over keeping it from falling into the power of the enemy. As early as November 4, 1861, he mentions it. About the middle of

<sup>28</sup> The Two Pillars were two important hills on each side of the river above Nanking.

<sup>29</sup> *Dispatches*, XV, 64-66.

December he indicates that he may possibly send his brother, Kuo-ch'üan, to Shanghai because of its great strategic and economic value through its trade relations with Soochow, Hangchow, and foreign lands. It is not quite clear, but there are some indications, that he actually offered the place to his brother, who preferred to go on to Nanking. At any rate, within the next ten weeks he had secured Li Hung-chang's consent to go there, and had promised to supplement his Anhui recruits with General Ch'en Hsueh-ch'i—who had once been in the rebel ranks—and a thousand men, supplemented by five thousand of the Hunan water forces.

On the twenty-second of February Li Hung-chang came to Anking with his new Anhui force. He proceeded to organise them on the model of Tsêng's Hunan army, following similar rules. Tsêng detailed several *ying* of his own command to help train these new men. At the end of March eight thousand of the Anhui force were ready to go down the river. So urgent was the call for them that the original purpose of having Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan and Li Hung-chang fight their way down the river was abandoned, and seven steamers were chartered at a cost of 180,000 *taels*, which the Shanghai gentry secured. During the month of April the entire body was carried down in three trips.<sup>30</sup> On April 25 Li received the formal appointment, long expected, of acting governor of Kiangsu.<sup>31</sup>

The points of chief military activity were now along the Yangtse below Anking, where Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan was slowly making his way with a force of twenty thousand men, accompanied by his brother, Chen-kan, with about five thousand, and P'eng Yu-ling, who commanded the fleet. In Chekiang, Tso Tsung-tang was commencing his

<sup>30</sup> Nienp'u, VIII, 8 ff.; *Home Letters*, April 1 and 2, 1862.

<sup>31</sup> *Home Letters*, May 9, 1862.



operations. In central Anhui, about Lüchow, Tolunga and Li Shou-i had the difficult task of preventing the Taiping and Nien rebels from coming together. South of Nanking Pao Ch'ao was attacking Ningkuo, and the southern portion of Anhui was held by the army of Chang Yun-lan, who, in possession of Huichow, had command of the roads leading into Chekiang.<sup>32</sup> Independent of Tsêng, but co-operating heartily with him, were Tuhsinga with Kiangpei regulars, Yuan Chia-san, and Li Shi-chung along the upper Hwai River in Anhui; also an independent detachment at Chinkiang.<sup>33</sup>

On May 13, 1862, Lüchow was captured by Tolunga after having been stoutly defended for a long time by the Yingwang. The rebels fled to Shouchow, followed by Tolunga. Shouchow then succumbed, and Miao P'ei-lin treacherously delivered up the Yingwang to Sheng Pao. He was put to death by Tolunga in the presence of the army.<sup>34</sup> This victory greatly simplified the task of concentrating on the chief objective points, Nanking and the cities of southern Anhui, Chekiang, and Kiangsu. Nevertheless, when the war was thus apparently localised, there came a call for help from far-away Shensi, which robbed the imperialists of Tolunga's valuable coöperation. He did manage to leave a garrison of five thousand men at Lüchow.<sup>35</sup>

The imperial cause now prospered at all points except Huchow in northern Chekiang. Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan continued to work his way down the river, capturing all the towns along the way, and he arrived on May 31 before the walls of Nanking, where he pitched his tents at Yuhwat'ai.<sup>36</sup> Yangchow on the Grand Canal fell to Tuhsinga,

<sup>32</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 4-8, *passim*.

<sup>33</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 10b.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 13b; Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 49.

<sup>35</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 12b.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 11a; *Dispatches*, XVI, 9-12.

thus pacifying northern Kiangsu.<sup>87</sup> In Chekiang Taichow was retaken. With foreign aid Ningpo was also captured.<sup>88</sup>

Nothing seemed more probable than the speedy end of the war. But Tsêng Kuo-fan, having slowly and with the greatest difficulty brought these forces to concentrate on Nanking, was unwilling to risk everything on a single throw. If he gathered all his available men before Nanking the rebels outside might once more scatter out and make it necessary to do the work all over again. He therefore adopted an "anaconda policy," gradually closing in on the rebels from three directions as described above, while his brother at Nanking slowly strangled that city.

<sup>87</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 12a.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 12.

## CHAPTER XII

### FOREIGNERS AND THE REBELLION

BEFORE considering the final stages of the rebellion, in order to understand more perfectly the relative credit due the foreigners, it is desirable to examine the part played by them in the suppression of the movement.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is undertaken only in order to make clear the character of Tsêng's part in the war. There is need of a careful study of the development of foreign policy and opinion during the decade 1853 to 1863, made from newspapers, official reports, correspondence, and reports of missionaries, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, and from Chinese documents, where such are available. Morse has done this, but chiefly from the first two classes of sources named. The official correspondence of Chinese officials with their government, where it can be had, might throw much light on obscure points. The missionary societies in their archives may possibly have some material not necessarily embodied in their reports.

Yet in its general outlines the story of the gradual transformation of a policy of strict neutrality into one of armed intervention is well known. What I have included in this chapter is therefore no new contribution, but the retelling of a story that has been more fully told in such books as those of Morse, Andrew Wilson, *The Ever Victorious Army*, Hake, *Events in the Taiping Rebellion*, Montaldo de Jesus, *Historic Shanghai*, Williams, *The Middle Kingdom*, and McLellan, *The Story of Shanghai*.

In regard to the change of policy that led to intervention, it is necessary to note that there was widespread opposition to aiding the imperialists. This opposition sometimes advocated a continuation of the policy of neutrality and sometimes almost demanded recognition of an intervention in behalf of the insurgents. This pro-Taiping or anti-imperialist sentiment was not confined to notorious filibusterers such as "Lin-li" (A. F. Lindley), but was expressed even by members of parliament far removed from the immediate scene of conflict, such as Colonel Sykes, whose letters to various newspapers had a great deal to say against the government. In the collection of letters by Sykes, *The Taiping Rebellion in China*, 1863, are included letters of Dr. Legge and Rev. Griffith John, both eminent missionaries, deprecating the policy of intervention. As late as 1903 in his *Cycle of Cathay*, p. 141,

There was naturally much wonder on the part of foreign governments when, early in 1853, the Taiping army concluded its long, triumphant march by taking Nanking, there to establish a nation. The Christian basis of the new faith challenged their curiosity. Great Britain, France, and the United States sent expeditions up the Yangtze to ascertain the extent of the power of the Taipings and the nature of their doctrines.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Martin, the famous American educator, whose name is widely known among Chinese scholars, maintained that he had always regarded the policy of intervention as wrong, and ascribed it to the influence of the French minister under representations of Roman Catholic missionaries who opposed the Protestant form of religion professed by the Taipings. He himself was not unaware of their errors, but considered their very willingness to accept a foreign religion as a seed of hope for China's future, and therefore earnestly advocated their recognition in 1857, *North China Herald*, June 13 and 20, 1857. It is not possible to dismiss a group of men which contains three such names with a sneer. In this group we also find T. T. Meadows of the British consular service and Commander Lindesay Brine, at least before their government had adopted a pro-imperialist policy.

An equal array of names might be brought forward on the other side, and it is their point of view which was eventually adopted, albeit not without much discussion. If there were soldiers of fortune on one side such were found also on the other. It is only because General Ward's illegitimate "Ever Victorious Army," objected to at first because it broke neutrality, became a recognised instrument shortly afterwards and received official British recognition and a British commander, Colonel Gordon, that the whole enterprise did not suffer the same condemnation meted out to those who furnished arms and sold their services to the Taiping side. In fact, Ward did have to claim Chinese citizenship in order to be free from consular molestation.

These are some of the reasons which make a careful study of the foreign relations of the period desirable in order that we may arrive at conclusions more solidly grounded.

<sup>2</sup> For accounts of these expeditions, (a) that of Sir George Bonham, April-May, 1853, British plenipotentiary, and Captain Fishbourne, accompanied by T. T. Meadows in *H. M. S. Hermes*, see *British and Foreign State Papers*, XLIV (1853-1854), and T. T. Meadows, *The Chinese and their Rebellions*, chapter XVII; (b) the visit of Robert McLane on the *Susquehanna*, Captain Marshall, see *38 Congress, 2 Senate Executive Document*, pp. 22, Part 1; (c) the visit of the French Minister Bourbillon on the *Cassini*, see the same, p. 92.

T. T. Meadows, secretary of the British expedition in H. M. S. *Hermes*, April, 1853, was much impressed with the Taipings, but his superior, Sir George Bonham, who studied translations of their books, was more reserved. He announced to the Taiping government a policy of strict neutrality. In reporting to the British government he expressed the suspicion that the religious tenets of the rebels were mainly a "political engine of power by the chiefs to sway the minds of those whom they are anxious to attach to their cause."<sup>3</sup> His Chinese secretary, Dr. W. H. Medhurst, in his report to Sir George, almost discovers what appears to have been the true origin of the rebellion.<sup>4</sup> Speaking of the curious medley of religious nonsense and political sagacity he says:

The only way to account for the difference, is the supposition that two minds, or different sets of men, have been at work, the one animated by a sincere and humble desire to serve God and to seek His favour through the merits of the only Saviour, and the other desirous of imposing on the credulity of the unthinking many, with the view of elevating themselves to power.

If the insurrection should succeed, he thought that toleration would be secured for Christianity and commercial intercourse possibly encouraged—but with the strict suppression of opium. If there was a chance that the Taipings should prove liberal, he felt certain that the imperial side in the event of victory would be even more exclusive and insolent than before, remembering against them the fact that the Taiping religion was indebted greatly to the West for its ideas. Nevertheless he advocated a policy of neutrality.<sup>5</sup>

The French minister, who visited Nanking late in 1853, failed to meet the higher officials of the new government

<sup>3</sup> *British and Foreign State Papers*, XLIV, 508.

<sup>4</sup> See chapter III.

<sup>5</sup> *British and Foreign State Papers*, XLIV, 531 f.

and returned with the same point of view, feeling that this movement was not yet far enough along to be regarded as worthy of recognition.

The American commissioner, Robert McLane, reached Nanking in May, 1854. By that time the religious eccentricities had become more pronounced, Yang being honored as the Holy Ghost, and the political assumptions of the Taipings had become more exalted and exclusive. If their communications with Sir George Bonham a year before had seemed arrogant, the letter that awaited Mr. McLane was impossible. After reciting their objections to McLane's letter, because it claimed equality and because it was not accompanied by "precious gifts"—considerations which led them to keep it from the Eastern king—they continue :<sup>6</sup>

If you do, indeed, respect Heaven and recognise the Sovereign, then our celestial court, viewing all under Heaven as one family and uniting all nations as one body, will most assuredly regard your faithful purpose and permit you year by year to bring tribute and annually come to pay court, so that you may become the ministers and people of the celestial Kingdom, forever bathing yourselves in the gracious streams of the Celestial Dynasty, peacefully residing in your own lands, and living quietly, enjoy great glory. This is the sincere desire of us the great ministers. Quickly ought you to conform to and not oppose this mandatory dispatch.

This pronouncement, coupled with their religious vagaries, led Mr. McLane to withhold from them the recognition he was authorised to accord if he found them capable of becoming a true government.<sup>7</sup> After considering their religious extravagances he thus writes of their proposals :<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 35 Cong., 2 Senate Ex. Doc. 22, Part 1, 62 f.

<sup>7</sup> Foster, *American Diplomacy in the Orient*, p. 211.

<sup>8</sup> 35 Cong., 2 Senate Ex. Doc. 22, Part 1. The whole report is well worth

When their operations are regarded in a more practical bearing, the case presented for your consideration is not less unsatisfactory than their civil and religious organisation itself. They are composed almost exclusively of the ignorant and unenlightened population of the interior; limited in numbers, not exceeding from fifty to one hundred thousand men, in the field and in the besieged cities throughout that portion of the empire they hold in check or in actual possession; yet the imperialists are quite incapable of resisting them, and still more hopeless is their immediate prospect of recovering the main points that have fallen. . . . Whatever may have been the hopes of the enlightened and civilized nations of the earth in regard to this movement, it is now apparent that they neither profess nor apprehend Christianity, and whatever may be the true judgment to form of their political power, it can no longer be doubted that intercourse cannot be established or maintained on terms of equality.

Their general attitude towards foreigners did not reveal any studied hostility, and in his book Meadows conveys the distinct impression that he found them inclined to be friendly, yet without a sufficient understanding of foreign ideas to accept outsiders as on an equality with themselves. They were also apathetic in the matter of foreign trade and did not reach forth their hands to take Shanghai when it was practically theirs, the Triads having occupied it by a successful stroke within the city.\*

The occupation of Shanghai by the Triads, 1853-1856, raised several questions, of which two were destined to prove of importance up to the present time. The first was how to deal with the customs duties in the absence of the legal authorities from their places; this was

reading. McLane's reasoning is as clear and his observations as keen as those of his British colleague. Despite the more amateur character of the American representatives abroad at this period, they show on the whole much ability and deserve more consideration and respect than they are usually given.

\* Morse, *International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, II, 13 ff.

eventually met by a foreign-controlled custom house out of which the present system arose when the Chinese realised how well the temporary plan worked. The second was the problem of dealing with the refugees within the area reserved for foreigners, which in time led to the growth of a municipality under foreign control, rejecting Chinese rule even over the native population except as a mixed court preserved the theory of Chinese rule. A third question was raised by the approach of the Chinese soldiers too near the settlement, which brought about the battle of Muddy Flat (1854) and several years later furnished a precedent for the doctrine that Shanghai was neutral territory.<sup>10</sup>

In 1856 the Arrow War and the subsequent negotiation of treaties in the north (1858) altered the foreign situation. Prior to this time foreigners had treaty rights in five seaports only; now the Yangtse was open to navigation and a certain number of cities on that stream had become ports of entry. The ratification of this treaty was delayed until after the British and French, in 1859 and 1860, renewed the war against China in the north and forced their way to Peking after having met and defeated the Mongolian cavalry leader, Senkolintsin.<sup>11</sup> The imperial court fled to Jehol, leaving Prince Kung to carry on the necessary negotiations.<sup>12</sup>

In one sense it is doubtless true that this invasion was a cause of the renewal of Taiping activities in 1858 and 1860. The withdrawal of Senkolintsin to meet the Allies probably aroused the Nien rebels to new efforts in Honan and Shantung. We know also that Tsêng Kuo-fan was more hard pressed than ever for the means to carry on

<sup>10</sup> These subjects are developed in Morse, II, chapters I and II; also Montaldo de Jesus, *Historic Shanghai*, and McClellan, *The Story of Shanghai*.

<sup>11</sup> and <sup>12</sup> Good accounts of this war may be found in many books, *inter alia*, Williams, *The Middle Kingdom*, and Morse, I.



his operations. On the other hand, it is extremely unlikely that the foreign war had much effect on the fortunes of either side. At least, Tsêng Kuo-fan, who was holding the Taiping rebels in check in the central provinces, and the generals nearer Nanking did not, as far as we can discover, reduce their armies by a single soldier. The aggressions of the British and French in Canton and towards Peking were regarded largely as local affairs.

The increased activities of the Nien rebels in the region of northern Anhui are more clearly traceable to the withdrawal of Senkolintsin, and it is possible that this reacted on the Taiping rebels in Anhui. We have seen, and shall see again, that the latter made desperate efforts to cut their way through to Nanking, frustrated almost always by Kwan Wen and Tsêng Kuo-fan. After the Allies had defeated the Chinese near Peking and reached the capital in the summer of 1860 there was a little more danger of Taiping success in that direction, and with indemnities to pay, the imperial government may well have welcomed foreign aid against their internal foes. Prior to that we have small ground for thinking that the foreign war of 1856-1860 crippled the imperial government appreciably against the Taipings. To say that because of this hostility the siege of Nanking was lifted is certainly untenable, since none of the soldiers from central China moved north. In fact, the Allies' campaign in the north did not develop until August, 1860, whereas the Chungwang had defeated the great camp outside Nanking on May 5, after which he began his depredations in Kiangsu and Chekiang.<sup>13</sup> The Allies were met in August by Senkolintsin, who expected to be victorious. After his defeat Tsêng offered to go to the north, but was not permitted to do so. Hence we are safe in rejecting the idea that the Arrow War caused the Taiping vivacity at this period.

<sup>13</sup> *P'ing-t'ing Yueh-wei Chi-lueh*, IX, 14b.

On June 10 Tsêng was appointed acting viceroy of the Two Kiang, with orders to relieve the pressure on Kiangsu.<sup>14</sup> Since he was unable to leave Anking it was necessary for the governor to manage affairs in that province. From this time are dated two events which led eventually to intervention. Of these, the first was the employment of Frederick T. Ward, probably by Chinese merchants of Shanghai, who, shortly after the capture of Sungkiang by the Chungwang in 1860, promised him 30,000 *taels* to retake that city.<sup>15</sup> After failing once, Ward employed one hundred Manila-men and white officers, Forrester and Burgevine, and took the city on July 17. Sungkiang now became Ward's headquarters, whence he led his force to the attack of Tsingpu. He found this place defended by adventurers in Taiping employ, and failed in his attempt (August, 1860). He was eventually compelled to abandon the effort and return to Sungkiang, where he occupied the next few months in drilling a force of Chinese troops, his expenses being met in a roundabout way by revenues from the Shanghai customs.<sup>16</sup>

The appearance of the Chungwang in Kiangsu threw Shanghai into consternation, for from the interior thousands of refugees came streaming into the settlement; the Chungwang himself reached the outskirts of the

<sup>14</sup> *Dispatches*, XI, 41 f.

<sup>15</sup> Morse, II, 69 ff.; A. Wilson, *The Ever Victorious Army*, pp. 63 f.

<sup>16</sup> On this point the foreign writers (except Williams, *The Middle Kingdom*, who says that it was the *taotai*) agree that a Chinese firm, "Takee," employed Ward and that the funds came from Chinese merchants. On the contrary, the Chungwang says that the governor employed foreign devils (*Autobiography*, p. 35), and a small popular Chinese account of operations in Kiangsu (*Wu-chung P'ing K'uo Chi*, I, 1a) states that the acting provincial treasurer and *taotai* Wu employed them. Since strict neutrality had been enforced up to that time I surmise that both are right and wrong—the government actually employing the men and furnishing the funds from the customs revenues, but acting through merchants who, presumably, had no connection with officialdom, for fear of foreign complications.

city on the eighteenth of August. The consuls stationed there decided to enforce neutrality and sent word to the Chungwang that he was not to take the city, and eventually he was repelled by the combined British and French official forces.<sup>17</sup> The Chungwang asserts that the expedition to Shanghai was undertaken on invitation from some "barbarians" living there as well as by imperialists in correspondence with the insurgents. Prevented by inclement weather from making a speedy march into the city, and confronted by the fact that "Governor Hsueh had engaged one or two thousand devils to guard the city and decapitated the whole of the Imperialists who were in correspondence with me," the Chungwang was compelled to withdraw.<sup>18</sup>

This act of the foreigners, who thus extended the doctrine of neutrality to embrace purely Chinese territory which could be reached by going around the settlements, was actually an abandonment of neutrality in favor of the imperialist side. The pitiable spectacle of desolation and distress at their very gates, and even more, the fear of a failure of supplies for the daily increasing population of Shanghai, led to still further extension of this anti-Taiping neutrality to a thirty-mile radius about Shanghai. Admiral Sir James Hope, returning from Peking, went up the Yangtse, February, 1861, with Harry

<sup>17</sup> McClellan, *The Story of Shanghai*, p. 49.

<sup>18</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, pp. 35 f. A. Wilson, p. 66, coupling with this account the statements of Bruce that the rebel attack took them by surprise, believes that Shanghai was kept out of Taiping hands by mere accident. In the case of a *fait accompli* there is question whether the policy of intervention would have been followed. The possession of Shanghai was one of the chief imperialist advantages because of the volume of its trade. Why the Taipings did not take it in 1853 is a mystery, the clue to which will probably be found in the early experience of the Taiping-wang with the Triads in Kwangsi. Had the Taipings but reached forth their hands and secured the revenues, the imperialists would certainly have had a vastly more difficult financial problem and might have lost the war.

Parkes to arrange for the opening of treaty ports conceded in 1860, and stopped at Nanking, where they interviewed some of the chiefs and secured a promise from the T'ienwang that Shanghai should be unmolested for a year.<sup>19</sup> Their report of conditions in the interior and in Nanking was not flattering to either side, but it particularly condemned the Taipings, in whose cities they discovered the utmost misery, whilst those of the imperialists were somewhat better off.<sup>20</sup> Whatever other factors contributed to the decision to aid the imperialists, this trip up to Hankow must be set down as one of the most important.

No longer bound by the T'ienwang's promise of the year before, the Taipings once more resolved to attempt the capture of Shanghai in 1862. After securing Hangchow they intimated that a move on Shanghai would follow, and plots were discovered both in the city and the settlement for helping them. Foreigners also lent aid by smuggling arms, ammunition, and opium. Just as the consuls of Western powers had hitherto failed to put down Ward and his type of adventurers who helped the imperialists, so now they failed to prevent foreign aid from reaching the Taipings.<sup>21</sup> The rebels passed Woosung on January 13, thirty thousand strong; another group attacked Ward at Sungkiang.<sup>22</sup> After defeating the latter at Sungkiang, Ward brought his seven hundred Chinese to Shanghai, where he gave aid to Admiral Hope, who led about the same number of French and British sailors and marines, and defeated the Taiping army at Kaochiaio, across the river between Shanghai and Woosung.<sup>23</sup> In this and other operations around

<sup>19</sup> A. Wilson, p. 71.

<sup>20</sup> Descriptions in S. Lane-Poole, *Life of Sir Harry Parkes*, I, 419 ff.

<sup>21</sup> Montaldo de Jesus, *Historic Shanghai*, pp. 116 ff.

<sup>22</sup> Morse, II, 73.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* (From *North China Herald*, February 7, 1862.)

Shanghai Ward's little army received much praise for its skill and valor.

The British now openly reversed their policy of neutrality, and, after negotiations with the French and Chinese in Peking; adopted the suggestion of Admiral Hope, seconded by Admiral Protet, that the Taipings be kept out of the territory embraced within a thirty-mile radius from Shanghai.<sup>24</sup> Ward's force was now as highly regarded as it had been condemned but a few months earlier.<sup>25</sup> The combined Anglo-French and "Ever Victorious Army" attacked and captured a number of small towns and villages in the limits assigned. About May 1, successful attacks were made on Kiating; on May 12, Tsingpu fell to Ward's little force. Later, however, the defence of these two places became impossible because the Chungwang occupied Kiating and invested Tsingpu, from which place Ward was able to extricate himself only through aid from Admiral Hope. A general retirement was made to Shanghai (June 14).<sup>26</sup> General Ward was now authorised to increase his force to a maximum of six thousand men.<sup>27</sup> From Sungkiang he retook Tsingpu in August, but the great heat and the pestilence at Shanghai prevented much activity among foreign troops.

We already know what was Tsêng's opinion regarding the use of foreign aid beyond the treaty ports. After the retirement of the combined foreign contingents from Kiating and Tsingpu in May, rumors were current that Indian troops were to be brought to Shanghai, and an inquiry was addressed to Tsêng Kuo-fan from Peking as to his position regarding such a move. Tsêng's reply

<sup>24</sup> Montaldo de Jesus, pp. 136 ff.

<sup>25</sup> Correspondence between Bruce and Hope and letter of Gen. Michel to Bruce. *Further Papers Relating to the Rebellion in China*, 1862, pp. 8, 10, 21.

<sup>26</sup> Montaldo de Jesus, pp. 136 ff.

<sup>27</sup> Morse, II, 77.

is worth quoting *in extenso*. After stating that he had written to Tso Tsung-tang, who did not desire large numbers of foreign soldiers and wished no Indian soldiers at all, and Li Hung-chang, who gave a rather evasive answer to the effect that he had discussed the matter with Admiral Hope, in the course of which the latter told him that reinforcements were coming but said nothing about troops from India, Tsêng goes on to say:

Your servant has discovered that the westerners by temperament love to win, and are unwilling to be appeased for the slightest angry glance or outburst. Ever since the defeat at Kiating and Tsingpu, because they are ashamed to face the ridicule of the [long-] haired rebels, and fear the contempt of the Imperial Court, they have repeatedly stated that their recruiting of forces and advancing once more is a part of their original plan. Now [we know that] for a long time England and France have regarded the enlistment of armies as a matter of common public enterprise, and the expense of their upkeep rests on the taxation of the whole body of merchants, thus precluding the possibility that one man should become the master. The disgrace of retreating from Kiating and Tsingpu is not so serious as to call for the sudden arousing of public anger. For this the rulers of their countries have no need to put forth strenuous efforts nor their merchants to bear additional taxes. The number of their soldiers does not seem to be very great for us to perceive and understand their noble generosity.

Since, however, there are certain rumours afloat, the question might properly be taken up by the Tsungli Yamen with the ministers at the capital to ascertain their truth. This done, it should express [to the ministers] its high appreciation, but at the same time point out the dangers [of this proposal] and remonstrate with them.

China's rebels are, in their origin, China's own children, and China's forces should certainly be sufficient to quell her own small disturbances. Meanwhile, not to mention the fact that we have, during the spring and summer of the present year, won back more than twenty cities and pacified the Yangtse River for

a thousand *li* so that the rebels cannot hold out much longer, the machinery is created whereby Kiangsu is to be pacified. If, through the force of circumstances, that machinery is not suitable, and the power of the rebels should not be weakened, let China bear her own burden. With the emperor lies the way of self-reliance—not to become fearful through the rise of difficulties and beg aid from foreign countries. Why should we, lightly borrowing soldiers, leave a legacy of ridicule to future generations? This is what I mean by saying, express your high appreciation and thank them.

The Yueh rebels who wander about on the byeways were originally but vagabond robbers; the affair at Tsingpu and Kiating is likewise but a trifling circumstance. Should England recruit Indian soldiers with the desire of getting revenge, bring together a large number and win, it would not prove her prowess; if she brought over only a small number and failed it would be a cause of ridicule. Thus uselessly to cause Indian soldiers to drain England's resources and trample Chinese soil would neither bring credit to the rulers above nor profit to the merchants below. Far better at once to decide on withdrawing their soldiers, thus causing Sungkiang and Shanghai to avoid endless regret and England and France to reap unending profit. This is what I mean by saying, point out the dangers and remonstrate with them.

If the Tsungli Yamen finds that in their negotiations with the ministers the latter are not inclined to give favourable consideration to these arguments, then employ other methods without limit. [Tell them for example] that now as before, when the question of using foreign soldiers was referred to your servant, he is without men to detach for coöperating with them, and would thus be despised everywhere. With the most earnest arguments it should clearly present our case, doing its utmost to find some way of carrying its point, and most carefully guarding against a lack of resources in [suggesting] plans.

The language of foreigners cannot be understood, their customs are different. If they should come to our aid and we should show suspicion of them or dislike them too deeply, it would certainly lead to our incurring their just anger. If [on the con-

trary], we should make sincere efforts to act in harmony with them, I still fear that in their hearts they will conceal a purpose that spells disaster for us. Consider such cases as the burning of boats at Hankow—disagreement over a few words, a dispute, bloodshed, and then at once all resources are bent for mutual destruction.

Your servant is first and last unwilling to coöperate with them in this attack, and moreover, after careful consideration, believes that to join with them now and later break with them would not be so good a policy as to deliberate first and [perhaps] later enter into [such an arrangement]. If they should come to the vicinity of our camp without a previous understanding there would certainly be occasion for friction. Wherefore your servant must again implore that you give instruction to the Boards amid the tangled circumstances of the hour, to be honest in their words and sincere in their actions. As they go into this [diplomatic] struggle if they are successful, let them be modest, and if worsted let them come to each others' aid. Above all, let them deport themselves modestly and particularly avoid giving occasion for putting their opponents on their guard. For our policy looks to the concentrating of all our resources on the Kwang rebels, nor should we plant another root of bitterness to send forth the branches of a great hostility. . . .<sup>28</sup>

Meanwhile at Ningpo the British and French warships bombarded the city, captured it, and delivered it to the imperialists, under the leadership of Captain Roderick Dew and Lieutenant Kenny (May 6).<sup>29</sup> This led to the adoption at Ningpo of a policy similar to that at Shanghai, and aid was furnished for the recapture of some small towns near that city. Ward came with his men to this region and received a fatal wound in the attack upon Tzeki, September 21. Not only the "Ever Victorious Army," but contingents from the British and French

<sup>28</sup> Nienp'u, VIII, 16a; *Dispatches*, 27-30 (July 18, 1862). There is nothing in this reply to show whether or no he had any special aversion to Indian soldiers.

<sup>29</sup> Morse, II, 78.



war vessels and another Chinese force of fifteen hundred men under French training took part in this attack.<sup>30</sup> Ward's remains were received with high honor at Sung-kiang, where he was buried, and to this day a memorial temple marks the site of his tomb. He was an able man, and though there are many who believe that he cherished a design to carve out for himself an empire in China,<sup>31</sup> no one begrudges him his laurels. Without him the work of Gordon would not have been possible, nor the organisation of the Franco-Chinese force to which we have just alluded. This force, which ultimately reached a total of about twenty-five hundred, was first placed under A. E. Le Brethon and Giquel. They helped Tso Tsung-tang in the recapture of Shangyu (November 28),<sup>32</sup> Dew likewise participating, and (early in 1863) of Shaoshing, which was abandoned by the rebels because of their operations outside.<sup>33</sup> When Le Brethon was killed in the capture of Shangyu, the command passed to Tardiff de Moidrey, who was likewise killed a little later and was replaced by Ensign Paul d'Aiguebelle.<sup>34</sup>

The "Ever Victorious Army," having lost its first commander, was temporarily led by an American, Edward Forrester. He refused to become the permanent commander and yielded the position to Henry Burgevine, another American.

Almost at this moment the terrible forty-six-day attack on Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan began, following a pestilence in the camp which made resistance doubly hard. The

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* Also Hake, *The Taeping Rebellion*, pp. 220 f.

<sup>31</sup> Wilson, *The Ever Victorious Army*, p. 91. Also for opinions mentioned consult Morse, II, 56 f., 79, notes.

<sup>32</sup> Morse, II, 79.

<sup>33</sup> Wilson, pp. 114-116; Morse, p. 79; Cordier, *Relations de la Chine avec les Puissances occidentales*, pp. 215-218. Cordier's account is partly from P. Giquel in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, June 15, 1864.

<sup>34</sup> Cordier, *ibid.*

various generals who might have been summoned to the aid of General Tsêng were held back by strategic considerations and Ch'en Hsueh-ch'i alone was available. On the plea that the campaigns in Kiangsu would suffer by his withdrawal, the younger Tsêng declined the aid of General Ch'en, though his critics suspect that he was jealous of his own prestige. This refusal was embarrassing to Tsêng Kuo-fan, who had already applied for his help. Yet he made the most of it and wrote to Li Hung-chang not to send Ch'en, or if he had already done so, to allow him to fight one or two battles and then return.<sup>35</sup>

Li Hung-chang then offered Burgevine and the small force already known as the "Ever Victorious Army." At first Tsêng declined its aid, but finally agreed to receive it on two conditions: first, that this force should not be stationed too near the Chinese force, but should fight at Hsiakwan or Kiufu Island below the city, or at some point above; and second, that if Nanking should be captured, Burgevine's men were not to loot promiscuously, but all the booty was to be brought together, half to be forwarded to Peking and half to be divided among the various troops. Burgevine's force might be permitted a double share. In any event a clear-cut agreement was necessary to prevent future dissensions and misunderstandings among the armies.<sup>36</sup> In a letter to Kuo-ch'üan, Tsêng advised making the best of these men when they arrived, not permitting them, however, to come into close contact with the other troops. "Burgevine's command," he adds, "are called 'foreign soldiers' but in reality they are Kwangtung and Ningpo men. They are disdainful, extravagant, utterly coarse, and their maintenance is very expensive. Your army should under no circumstances be in the same place with them. At every point within the

<sup>35</sup> *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, XX, 7b, 8b.

<sup>36</sup> *Miscellaneous Letters*, XX, 8b, 9a.

lines the 'host' army ought to be stronger than the 'guest' army, and everything should be under your control with a single command. Then nothing subverting will come about. This is most strictly enjoined upon you. If you write to Shanghai you should have this clearly explained to them.'<sup>37</sup>

The negotiations with Burgevine were prolonged. On November 17 Tsêng wrote that he had received the points of the compact with Burgevine, but was beginning to feel a little doubt as to whether he would actually come or not. Meanwhile the imperialists sustained fearful punishment, but on November 26 General Tsêng won a victory which relieved the siege and compelled the rebels to retire north of the river. But it did not allay the anxiety of the senior Tsêng, who feared that his brother might be lured away from his base. Just before the attack which drove away the Chungwang, Tsêng had gone so far as to urge his brother to retire from Nanking—a slight setback at Ningkuo having convinced him that the imperialists up the Yangtse were in a parlous position. Were Ningkuo to fall, a general retirement to Wuhu or Kingchukwan was almost inevitable, and if both Pao Ch'ao, with his weakened force, and Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan, who was only for the moment out of danger, should fail and suffer defeat, the whole cause would go down in ruin. Urgent letters on December 4, 5, 6, and 7 pleaded with Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan not to hazard the entire cause by remaining at a point so perilous.<sup>38</sup> The younger brother, though hard pressed, felt so much confidence in his strength that he disregarded his brother's appeals, and the need for retirement gradually passed away. The siege itself came to an end late in November, but only after the middle of

<sup>37</sup> Letter of November 8, 1862.

<sup>38</sup> Letters of November 17 to December 7.

December was certainly reached that it would not be renewed.

The causes for Burgevine's failure to come to Nan-king during this supreme crisis are variously given, one of them being arrears in pay. Of his sincerity we cannot be too sure in the light of his later career. It is obvious from the account given above that the Chinese army desired his presence, if at all only when the imperial cause was in desperate straits during November. His repeated delays on one pretext or another did not bring relief when it was needed, and the final withdrawal of steamers when Burgevine actually contemplated starting was not an act of bad faith on the Chinese side, but the natural thing to do when the need for his aid had passed.

As shown in the letter of Tsêng quoted above, the "Ever Victorious Army" was far from popular among the Chinese, and in view of the definite abandonment of neutrality by the foreign powers they, too, desired a change in its character. The Chinese regarded it as too costly, resented its interference in civil government at Sungkiang, its quarrelsome personnel, and its overbearing conduct towards other Chinese.

On the second of January, 1863, these troops mutinied because of arrears in pay. Word came from Shanghai that the money would be forwarded in two days, on the strength of which Burgevine pacified the men. But at the appointed time no money arrived, and Burgevine went to Shanghai to secure it in person. There he was told that the money had not been promised at that date. He therefore proceeded to the house of "Takee," where, after having insulted and struck the proprietor, he seized the money and returned to Sungkiang. This brought about his dismissal from the service, and the appointment, subject to Sir Frederick Bruce, first of Captain Holland and later of Captain Gordon, who transformed the army into

a well-disciplined force, after having quelled a number of mutinies, generally led by adventurers who resented the change in commanders.<sup>39</sup> Tsêng was so angered at this action of Burgevine's that he suggested in a letter to Li Hung-chang a joint memorial to the throne urging the execution of Burgevine for wounding the *tuotai* Ouyang.<sup>40</sup>

Tsêng's account of this episode differs somewhat from that given above from foreign sources. He says:

Burgevine, the foreign general of the "Ever Victorious Army," had decided in the middle decade of the ninth moon to come to the rescue of Nanking, but repeatedly postponed the date of starting, at last, however, appointing the tenth of December as the time of departure. Chen Wu-chao had gone ahead with two steamers to gather his forces at Chinkiang, but Burgevine, on the pretext that the pay of his army was in arrears, did not come into the Yangtse. On the third of January<sup>41</sup> in Sungkiang the gates were closed and a mutiny occurred, and on the 4th with several tens of the armed brigade [*i.e.*, those armed with foreign guns] he came to Shanghai, broke into the premises of Ouyang, wounded his relatives, seized more than \$40,000, and departed. Such trampling on rights and running amok without the slightest regard to the law not merely renders it impossible for China to use its strength to attack rebels, but is something that foreign countries openly detest. Li Hung-chang should clearly explain the case to the minister in Peking and together with him inflict the severest punishment.<sup>42</sup>

We are now in a position to understand Li Hung-chang's implacable hatred for this man whom he persistently refused to reinstate, even after Burgevine had gone to Peking and secured the support of the British and American ministers there.<sup>43</sup> The withdrawing of

<sup>39</sup> Hake, pp. 226-234.

<sup>40</sup> *Miscellaneous Letters*, XX, 34b.

<sup>41</sup> There is a discrepancy in dates here, foreign accounts giving the second.

<sup>42</sup> *Dispatches*, XVII, 52a.

<sup>43</sup> Burgevine's case is given in Hake, pp. 230 f. There he clearly reveals

steamers, when Burgevine was actually ready to start for Nanking, and even the withholding of pay from a force that was so uncontrollable are not hard to understand.

The agreement for the services of Colonel Charles George Gordon, made with the aid of General Stavelo to go into effect as soon as the British government should consent, provided for a maximum army of three thousand men.<sup>44</sup> While this consent was being awaited, trouble arose through the desire of Ward's old followers to have Burgevine continued as their commander, and by the failure of Holland at Taitsang which he attacked in vain on February 15. Another failure under Major Brennan at Fushan turned Li Hung-chang's support into dissatisfaction which almost caused him to suppress this force altogether.<sup>45</sup>

Fortunately the required permission now arrived and Gordon took over the command March 25, 1863. This event marked the adoption of a complete pro-imperial programme, for Gordon not only operated outside the thirty-mile limit, but was an officer of the British army detached with his government's consent for this task.

Gordon's campaigns opened with an effort to relieve Changshu. His 2,250 men were giving aid to an imperial force of 6,000, and together they drove off the enemy on April 7. Thence he repaired to Taitsang to rescue Li Han-chang, brother of the governor, who had been taken treacherously by the Taipings when they lured him into the city under pretence of surrendering it. Although he could oppose but 2,800 men to the 10,000 of the enemy, he

an unwillingness to serve under the governor. It is still hard to understand what he expected the authorities to do with an independent force that would not take orders. Wilson believes the quarrel arose over Chinese claims for credit in a battle with the Muwang, November, 1862.

<sup>44</sup> But with much protest by the British general. The reduction did not take effect at once.

<sup>45</sup> Morse, II, 92 f.; Wilson, p. 127.

successfully attacked the city April 30 and May 1.<sup>46</sup> Disaffection on the part of Burgevine's partisans in the army necessitated a return to Sungkiang, where Gordon reorganised the force, making a number of changes among the officers. With this new group Gordon marched forth to the siege of K'unshan (Quinsan) and arrived before the walls on May 27. His force now amounted to 600 artillerymen and 2,300 infantry.<sup>47</sup> The use of his "amphibious steamer," *Hyson*, greatly accelerated the capture of this city which, with the help of General Ch'en, fell on June 1.<sup>48</sup> Ch'en's claim for a great share of the credit, the fact that Gordon had ignored Ch'en's strategic suggestions, and the latter's jealousy over the successes achieved by the *Hyson* and by Gordon's strategy in taking the city, brought about serious friction between them, the rupture becoming so deep that Governor Li and Sir Halliday Macartney had to intervene. Trouble also arose because of the determination of Gordon to make K'unshan his base instead of Sungkiang, bringing on a mutiny repressed by stern measures.<sup>49</sup> From this time more formal army discipline prevailed than had been the case heretofore. But this was not accomplished without a third mutiny, which was settled by compromise.<sup>50</sup>

Many causes now conspired to lead Gordon to resign his command: friction with his men and with General Ch'en, the tardy settlement of legitimate claims,<sup>51</sup> and

<sup>46</sup> Morse, II, 94 f.; Wilson, pp. 150 f. The author finds in this incident at Taitsang the cause and justification for the murder of the surrendered *wangs* at Soochow by order of Li Hung-chang.

<sup>47</sup> Morse, II, 95; Wilson, p. 158.

<sup>48</sup> Wilson, pp. 159-182. Chinese sources give the date as May 31.

<sup>49</sup> Hake, pp. 260-282; Wilson, pp. 164 f.

<sup>50</sup> Wilson, pp. 166 ff.

<sup>51</sup> Here a study of the financial situation of the governor is necessary. With claims from Tsêng Kuo-fan and his own men, did apathy or poverty lead him to spar for time? Hake states that Gordon actually resigned July 25 and publishes his letter to Li Hung-chang.

the advice of friends. When he was about to leave for Shanghai (August 8) he learned that Burgevine had started with three hundred men to join the Taipings at Soochow with the eventual hope of winning for himself an empire.<sup>52</sup> The general opinion at Shanghai was that the K'unshan force would go over to their beloved Burgevine and make the situation serious. Gordon therefore resolved to continue his work.

Meanwhile the little army had pushed on from K'unshan towards Soochow. On July 29 it aided in the capture of Wukiang, an outpost in the defence of Soochow,<sup>53</sup> followed August 25 by the capture of Taihu-hsien, at the tip of the peninsula that extends into the lake.<sup>54</sup> A detachment took Kiangyin about September 30, and the combined forces were now ready to advance on Soochow.

This important center was held by the Muwang (T'an Shao-kwang), the favorite officer of the Chungwang (the latter being absent in Nanking, endeavoring to persuade the T'ienwang to flee from Nanking and establish himself elsewhere), and several other *wangs* and generals. From his *Autobiography* it seems clear that the Chungwang expected them to go over to the enemy, but realised that he himself could never join them in such a move, since he was one of the original Kwangsi men against whom the imperialists were especially severe. So he said to them in parting: "The present time is not one that will admit of my detaining you, if you have conceived any plans of your own." Their reply denied harboring any intentions of going over, but their actions gave the lie to their words. It was a part of their plot, which the Chungwang did not foresee, to slay the Muwang.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Wilson, pp. 170 ff.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172 f.

<sup>54</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 11b; *Journal North China Branch Royal Asiatic Society*, December, 1864, p. 119.

<sup>55</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, pp. 59 f.



They therefore entered into communications with General Ch'en looking to the surrender of the city of Soochow, and agreed to put the Muwang out of the way as a part of the compact—refusing to permit the Chungwang to suffer such a fate at their hands. The city was delivered over on December 6, 1863. The Nawang, who conducted the negotiations, was promised a military commission of the second grade.<sup>56</sup>

When the *wangs* came out of the city to meet Li Hung-chang all these stipulations were disregarded and they were treacherously put to death. Since Gordon had been a witness to the terms of surrender he considered the execution of the surrendered *wangs* an unjustifiable act of treachery and became so angry at the governor that he set out with the *Hyson* and some troops to capture and shoot him. Fortunately Li Hung-chang could not be found, and after reflecting for a few weeks Gordon continued to serve.<sup>57</sup>

The "Ever Victorious Army" suffered some decline in morale and discipline through the inactivity of Gordon during his retirement, but soon recovered after his return. Throughout the spring of 1864 it remained with the Chinese armies which were pushing forward from Soo-

<sup>56</sup> *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, XIX, 6 f.

<sup>57</sup> This incident is one of the most celebrated in the story of Gordon's career. Tsêng Kuo-fan gave his unqualified approval to Li Hung-chang's action, for he recorded in his diary: "Li Shao-ch'üan, when he killed the eight *wangs* who surrendered at Soochow, showed that his eye was clear and his hand heavy." Excerpts from *Diary*, II, 38. Wilson, as noted above (note 46), believed that this was in consideration of the treachery by the *wangs* at Taitsang where his brother was captured. The story is given in detail by Boulger, *Life of Sir Halliday Macartney*, pp. 92-122. Hake, p. 393, gives Li's and Ch'en's reasons for the treachery. Li seems to have become frightened because of the great number of men who were to come over and because he was in arrears in his payment to the soldiers, and feared a mutiny unless his men were permitted to plunder. General Ch'en feared that the Nawang would supplant him in Li Hung-chang's esteem. Morse, II, 100 f., practically agrees with Boulger, depending on files of

chow towards Ch'angchow, in the capture of which, May 11, Gordon and his men played a leading part. At the same time the French were giving valuable aid in Chekiang, Hangchow falling before their assaults and those of Tso Tsung-tang's men March 31, and, after the fall of Nanking, Huchow on August 18.<sup>58</sup> But when this, the last action of the Franco-Chinese force took place, the "Ever Victorious Army" was no longer in existence, because it had been mustered out of service on May 31, 1864.<sup>59</sup>

In attempting to estimate the place of the army in the suppression of the rebellion we must bear in mind how many important cities were captured through the brilliant strategy of the American, British, and French officers. Without their aid the campaign would doubtless have suffered delays, and difficulties and even dangers might have confronted the imperial cause which were thus obviated. The members were certainly better armed and better drilled than those of the purely Chinese forces coöperating with them. Their intervention added to that of foreign soldiers and sailors saved Shanghai from falling into Taiping hands and this in turn gave Li Hung-chang the revenues to pay his men. When we consider all the facts we cannot deny that their aid was most useful if not indeed vital.\*

Yet it would be rash to assert or assume that "Chinese" Gordon put down the Taiping Rebellion. He never

the *North China Herald* and proclamation of Li Hung-chang February 14, 1864. This incident, which shows Gordon to have been a man of honor, also shows him to have been saved with great difficulty from a fateful act which would have meant the destruction of his force and have placed him in the position of an outlaw. In none of the accounts, Chinese or foreign, have I found any confirmation of the statement that Gordon personally pledged his word that the lives of the *wangs* would be saved, though the terms of surrender certainly implied such a pledge from General Ch'en.

<sup>58</sup> *Journal North China Branch Royal Asiatic Society*, December, 1864, p. 120.

<sup>59</sup> Morse, II, chronology, XXV.

commanded a force of more than three thousand men. He was always strengthened by large Chinese armies to whom a share of the praise is due for the victories which their absence might have turned into defeats. And above all, the less spectacular but no less important work of the vast forces placed by Tsêng Kuo-fan and his generals in Anhui, Kiangsi, and about the Heavenly Capital itself, was causing the Taipings increasing anxiety, while beyond, in Hupeh and Honan, were other forces preventing the Nien and Taipings from joining hands.

It seems fair, therefore, to accept very literally the estimate of the chief historian of this army,<sup>60</sup> who, in quoting some of the eulogistic and even flattering accounts of Gordon's work, says:

I have said so much against Colonel Gordon's own wishes, because so much has been said on the subject and must be repeated here in order to explain the actual course of recent events in China; but when we come to look carefully at the sweeping statement that it was Colonel Gordon who put an end to the Tai-ping Rebellion, truth compels me to pause. Though perhaps, Li, Futai, in the dispatch quoted above, takes a good deal too much credit to himself for his share in the operations in Kiangsoo, yet there is no doubt that Gordon and his force, unaided, could not have cleared the province. While the brunt of the fighting fell on him, he required Imperialists to hold the places which he took; and their forces under General Ching and others, fought along with him so as greatly to contribute to his success. And it must be remembered, which is of far more importance, that it was the Imperialist victories of Tseng Kuo-fan and his generals which drove the Tai-pings into the seaboard districts of Kiangsoo and Chekiang. The Imperialists appear to have calculated upon the Allies preserving for them the cities of Shanghai and Ningpo. Had they not done so, they would probably have adopted a different course. Our countrymen, alarmed at the proximity of the Rebels to their

<sup>60</sup> Wilson, pp. 257 ff.

rich trading settlements, seemed to have imagined that this betokened a general triumph of the Tai-ping cause in China, but nothing could have been further from the real state of the case. There is no doubt that, had the Tai-pings been allowed to take Shanghai and Ningpo, and so obtain Foreign steamers, arms, and recruits to almost an indefinite extent, they would have given an immense deal more trouble than they did to the Chinese Government; but to have allowed them to do so, would have been to ignore our own treaty obligations to that Government. Hence the Imperialists had a two-fold reason for making no great efforts to prevent the advance of the Rebels towards these two consular ports. They calculated that both our interests and our duty would lead us to hold these ports against the Tai-pings, and they calculated rightly. What they might have done in other circumstances is a matter of speculation; but it is quite clear, judged both by the situation and by the results, that their allowing the Tai-pings to advance as these did was no proof whatever of their inability to deal with the Rebellion in their own slow and systematic way.

Yet in another way the attitude of the Western powers was a decisive factor, for their determination to withhold recognition from the Taiping Government in 1853 and 1854 was of service to the imperial cause. Had one of the stamp of T'ienteh or Fêng Yun-shan been in Nanking it is conceivable that recognition would have been accorded. In a negative way, then, we may grant that by leaving China alone to subdue her rebels, instead of aiding the Taipings, the cause of the Manchus had its chance to triumph, and the active aid rendered towards the end of the war made assurance doubly sure.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE STRUGGLE FOR NANKING AND COLLAPSE OF THE REBELLION

THE progress of the imperialists during the summer of 1862 was seriously interrupted by the heat and the resulting pestilence among the soldiers. In Anhui, Chekiang, and at Nanking great numbers of them died and countless others were ill and weak. Operations about the Taiping capital were therefore practically suspended.<sup>1</sup>

In the northwest, however, scattered rebels, chiefly the Nienfei, were unusually active. Li Shou-i, who had started for his home to mourn for his parents, was appointed imperial commissioner (ordered to serve during the period of his mourning with the rank of acting governor), and the military authorities of Shantung, Honan, Chihli, and Shansi were commanded to consult with him on measures of united action against both the Taiping and Nien rebels. Sheng Pao was also sent as an imperial commissioner into Shensi. So many imperial commissioners scattered about show us how seriously the government now regarded the situation. By their careful measures danger from the north was greatly minimised.

The pestilence was long continued. In October it was especially severe in its ravages about Ningkuo, and al-

<sup>1</sup> *Nienp'ü*, VIII, 17b; *Dispatches*, XVI, 53 f. (August 16) and XVI, 75 ff. (September 22), where Tsêng reports several generals as ill, more than half of Tso Tsung-tang's forces incapacitated, and 10,000 of his brother's camp at Nanking ill.

most as severe at Nanking, Huchow, and Ch'ichow. Among the leaders Pao Ch'ao and Chang Yun-lan were seriously ill. Tsêng Kuo-fan became gloomy over the prospects, and urged Peking to send another official of high rank to share his responsibility, but Peking refused to do so, professing its satisfaction with Tsêng's management of the campaigns in central China.<sup>2</sup>

Reports began to come in that the Taipings were going to take advantage of their enemy by dividing their troops into three great armies, of which one, led by the Shiwang, would attack Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan at Yuhwat'ai, outside Nanking. But the truth was even worse than the rumors. On October 13 the Chungwang himself led the armies against the younger Tsêng, while the other leaders inflicted defeat on Pao Ch'ao at Hsinghochuang and captured Ningkuo-hsien (October 28). In view of these reverses and dangers Tsêng sent a dispatch to Peking, November 3, enumerating the difficulties before him:<sup>3</sup> (1) repeated and desperate attacks on his brother at Yuhwat'ai; (2) fear lest the rebels should enter Kiangsi from Ningkuo and threaten his rear; (3) the danger that rebels at Tanyang should reach the Yangtse and dispute his control of it; and (4) the reports that Nien rebels were about to come from Honan through Hupeh to Anhui, where they expected to make common cause with the Taipings in raising the siege of Nanking. He reported, furthermore, a shortage of funds due to a falling off of the *likin* revenues in Kiangsi, making it necessary for him to resort to desperate measures to meet his obligations.<sup>4</sup> In conclusion he begged that Tolunga be stationed north of Anking to guard the Hupeh-Anhui border.

Even Tsêng began to waver. But, being something of a

<sup>2</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 21; *Dispatches*, XVI, 81 f. (October 5).

<sup>3</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 22b; *Dispatches*, XVII, 7, and 9-12.

<sup>4</sup> *Dispatches*, XVII, 9-12, 14-17.

philosopher, as was his remote ancestor of the days of Confucius, he bolstered up his spirits by composing admonitory couplets on the three words, purity, sincerity, diligence:<sup>5</sup>

Hold fame and riches alike cheap, desire little and keep your heart clean;

Keep utterly from illicit gain—demons will fear and gods respect you.

Act with the utmost care, even to the latest hour of life;  
If your goal you fail to gain, turn and seek the cause in yourself.

Let hand and eye work together, join mind and strength to each other;

Exhaust your knowledge, goad yourself onward, even through the night that follows day.

The worst fears of Tsêng, as outlined in his pessimistic memorial, were not realised. The rebels at Tanyang did, indeed, try to break out, but were defeated by Tsêng's flotilla with the help of the land forces, November 9 and 12, 1862, at Kinchu-kwan. The Yangtse thus remained clear of the enemy.

With terrific punishment at Yuhwat'ai Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan sustained an almost continuous attack for forty-six days, while the Chungwang and thirteen other *wangs*, reinforced from the city, tried to shatter him. Nor were they content to use the old-fashioned weapons hitherto in vogue, but employed foreign shells fired from mortars which fell upon his armies with a noise like thunder. They mined his breastworks and blew them up. Nevertheless he stood firm and his brother kept the grain roads open.

Tsêng Kuo-fan was almost beside himself with anxiety during these critical days, and so anxious was he that he consented to receive the aid of Burgevine and the "Ever

<sup>5</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 24b.

Victorious Army" in lieu of General Ch'en Hsueh-chi, whom he had loaned to Li Hung-chang and whose services the latter could ill spare at that moment from Kiangsu. For one reason after another Burgevine failed to come.<sup>6</sup> Tsêng, therefore, lest the Hunan force be shattered and his whole effort fail, urged Kuo-ch'üan to retire to Wuhu, for he thought that the chances of failure were certainly as great as those of success, and the whole imperial cause was at stake. But Kuo-ch'üan took the risk, and won.<sup>7</sup> At the end of forty-six days of gruelling warfare the rebels were driven off on November 26 following a hard battle in which several thousands fell. Thereupon the Chungwang retired north of the river.<sup>8</sup>

The victor of this long battle was awarded the highly prized "yellow jacket" and other marks of distinction, whilst his younger brother, Chen-kan, was granted the rank of a prefect—an honor he did not live to enjoy, because on the very day news was received of the award he died. Thereupon he was granted posthumous rank as a provincial judge and awarded a posthumous name.<sup>9</sup>

After the attacks on Yuhwat'ai had ceased Tsêng felt strong enough to detach some forces for service at Lü-chow, where they would avail to repel the Taiping attacks or act, if necessary, against Miao P'ei-lin. This officer had first been a Nien rebel, then for a time with the Taipings, then treacherously betraying the valiant Yingwang he had submitted to the imperialists. After that his conduct gave rise to suspicion and he now required careful watch-

<sup>6</sup> See chapter XII.

<sup>7</sup> Tsêng wrote him almost daily letters during this anxious period, encouraging, then warning of danger, and finally imploring him to withdraw.

<sup>8</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 24 f.; *Dispatches*, XVII, 27, 33.

<sup>9</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 28a, 30b. Such names were the gift of the emperor to worthy officials, usually of higher rank. For the younger Tsêng to receive it when he had just been promoted to the rank of a prefect was most unusual.



ing lest he rebel.<sup>10</sup> Tsêng also stationed both Anhui recruits and Hunan veterans at points opposite and above Nanking. South of that city the rebel strength was still imposing. On December 27, 1862, they had penetrated westward as far as Keemun, which, however, they could not hold.<sup>11</sup> To the southeast, Yenchow was captured early in 1863 by Tso Tsung-tang, and Changshu by Li Hung-chang.

Far away in Ssuch'uan the Assistant king, Shi Ta-k'ai, was defeated and captured at Shuchow on January 31, 1863. For some time he had wandered at will over that enormous province, defeating the official troops in many engagements. When they brought against him approximately a hundred thousand men, chiefly militia (a number almost equal to his own following), he was overpowered and withdrew into Yunnan. On January 9, 1863, he was reported at Sunglin with five or six thousand of his guard, after having appeared at various places in the interior of Yunnan and even in some districts of Kweichow. The officials hastened to surround him; he was attacked, wounded, and eventually captured. Carried in triumph to Chengtu, the provincial capital, where he composed his 'diary,' he was put to death a month later with two thousand of his followers. Thus perished the last of the original *wangs* who had followed the *T'ienwang* from Kiangsi. For several years he had been detached from the main body of the Taipings and become a vagabond adventurer, but among the heroes of that period his name stands out from the others and stories and legends in great profusion cluster about this wandering knight.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 26.

<sup>11</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 27; *Dispatches*, XVIII, 39-42, 46a.

<sup>12</sup> *Nienp'u*, VIII, 32; *Hatsuzoku Ran Shi*, pp. 101-106, *passim*. A book purporting to be the diary of Shi Ta-k'ai has been published recently, but the presence of a number of modern terms has led to its being suspected as a forgery, or at least as having been 'edited' liberally.

The beginning of 1863 thus saw the emperor's cause slightly improved. The various commands in Kiangsi, Anhui, and Hupeh were preventing the insurgents from retiring into central China, at the same time keeping apart the Nienfei and Taipings towards the north; and the "Ever Victorious Army" was undergoing the reorganisation under General Gordon which enabled it to become such a factor in the pacifying of Kiangsu. During this period the less spectacular Anglo-French forces in Chekiang were rendering aid to Tso Tsung-tang. The foreign observers in the treaty ports had the achievements of these two forces, particularly of the "Ever Victorious Army," reported to them every week. As they followed the movements of the army in its successful progress through Kiangsu they gained the impression that Gordon and his men bore the chief burden of active warfare. We must not, however, deny to the commander-in-chief at Anking, with his eye on the theaters of war, doing all in his power against serious handicaps which we are now in a position to appreciate, the meed of honor that is his due. His laurels have been taken away by Western writers, who have known little of the enormous difficulties he overcame, having had access only to the records of the operations in Kiangsu and Chekiang.<sup>13</sup>

During March, 1863, Tsêng determined to make a tour of inspection from Anking to the theater of operations outside the walls of Nanking, despite the fact that rebel activities rendered it a risky adventure.<sup>14</sup> Leaving Anking on the seventeenth, he paid a short visit to P'eng Yu-ling at Wuhu and arrived at Yuhwat'ai on the twenty-fourth. There he remained until the twenty-ninth.

<sup>13</sup> One of the most recent accounts of the "Ever Victorious Army" and its campaigns will be found in Morse, H. B., *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, II, chapters IV and V. It is derived almost entirely from sources in English.

<sup>14</sup> *Dispatches*, XVIII, 23-25.

In reporting this visit Tsêng found reasons both for discouragement and for hope. On the one hand (a) poor villagers along the river had been forced to escape for safety to the islands where many had perished; (b) so widespread was the devastation of fields in Chekiang and Kiangsu that the rebels faced a shortage of supplies which led them to consider a general retirement into Kiangsi—a very serious possibility if realised;<sup>15</sup> (c) reconquered regions in Anhui and Chekiang, still subject to wandering rebels (and if popular reports were correct, even more to imperialists), could not yet be brought under cultivation; and (d) Li Shi-chung was losing battles—P'ukow and other small places had just fallen—under circumstances that suggested treachery. His dismissal was necessary.

Elements of hope, on the contrary, were: (a) the very lack of agriculture, which brought the danger of a general retirement inland, was also weakening the rebels so that they could not hold out much longer; (b) most of the strongholds and strategic points east and south of Nanking were in the hands of the government; and (c) amid all the disappointments and hardships the spirits of the army remained good. Not the slightest murmur of disloyalty was heard.<sup>16</sup>

While Tsêng was on this journey some rebel bands were driven into the Poyang area of Kiangsi, and others into the Huichow and Keemun regions. By this time Tso Tsung-tang, having captured Kinhwa (March 1) and Shaohsing (March 13), together with several other districts in eastern Chekiang,<sup>17</sup> felt strong enough to spare

<sup>15</sup> The Chungwang was urging this, but the T'ienwang vetoed it.

<sup>16</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 3; *Dispatches*, XVIII, 23-25.

<sup>17</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 1b, 2a; *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, XV, 1b-3a. *Hatsusoku Ran Shi* omits these because in each case the cities were actually abandoned as untenable and not captured.

forces for the aid of Huichow. During the third moon (April 18-May 17) Tso was appointed viceroy of Minche and acting governor of Chekiang. In a later dispatch Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan was designated as titular governor of the latter province. The forces of Pao Ch'ao and those supplied by Tso Tsung-tang gave strength enough to the loyalists outside Huichow, who drove away the rebels there on May 12.

Other victories were reported in the direction of Chekiang in the territories of Huichow and Hsiuning. But in the north trouble again broke out when Miao P'ei-lin, a former rebel who had come over and seemed to prove his loyalty by surrendering the Yingwang, again revolted at Shouchow. Tsêng had for some time been watching him, and now laid siege to the region where he was strong in Shouchow and Ch'ichow. To add to the danger and confusion in that direction, the Nienfei effected a junction with the Taipings in spite of imperial watchfulness, and arrived before Luanchow, north of Anking on May 11.<sup>18</sup>

These activities in widely separated areas were so similar to the tactics employed by the Chungwang and the Yingwang during the critical days of the siege of Anking, that Tsêng believed they were again trying to induce him to draw away men from the siege of Nanking.<sup>19</sup> As on the former occasion, he realised the possibility of serious danger at some of these outlying points, but as on the former occasion, he was unwilling to withdraw men for use in Hupeh lest he weaken himself too much at the chief goal of all his efforts and shatter his whole campaign. To stand on the defensive at these places and prevent Taiping successes until Tso Tsung-tang should capture Fuyang and bring the conquest of Hang-

<sup>18</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 5.

<sup>19</sup> *Dispatches*, XVIII, 44 (May 14, 1863).

chow into the range of possibility, while Li Hung-chang was securing Soochow by taking K'unshan (Quinsan), was the policy that he deemed wise. He aimed to make Nanking, Hangchow, and Soochow the corners of the triangle within which the Taipings were to be confined until they were finally crushed. The strategy was sound. Its rapid accomplishment was practically impossible owing to the lack of forces under his command.

Nevertheless progress was visible in Kiangsu, where Li Hung-chang's forces in combination with those of General Gordon took Taitsang (May 2),<sup>20</sup> thereby opening the way to K'unshan which they captured on May 31.<sup>21</sup> It was possible now to concentrate on Soochow. Within Tsêng's direct jurisdiction the siege of Luanchow was lifted through the efforts of Pao Ch'ao, aided by other generals, May 18, and moved to the relief of Shouchow which Miao P'ei-lin was besieging. In his advance Pao Ch'ao drove off all wandering rebels from northern Anhui,<sup>22</sup> but he and others were held back by the Nienfei until it was too late to reach Shouchow before it fell before Miao P'ei-lin (July 19, 1863). The imperialists were thrown back on Luanchow and Sanhotsien.<sup>23</sup>

At Nanking the rebel entrenchments at Yuhwat'ai fell on June 13. Those at Hsiakwan were captured by the joint efforts of Yang Tsai-fu (henceforth known as Yang Yoh-ping) and P'eng Yu-ling, and finally on July 18 the

<sup>20</sup> This is the date given in *P'ing-ting Yuch-fei Chi-lueh*, XV, 10b, and *Journal North China Royal Asiatic Society*, December, 1864, p. 119, n. Morse, II, 95, gives May 1, but does not cite his authority. Morse does not mention the Chinese as participating but Chinese accounts name some of the commanders who were stationed there. The Chinese account does greater justice to Gordon than Morse's does to the Chinese.

<sup>21</sup> Here again Morse differs, placing the date on June 1. For details of this attack read Morse, II, 95 ff., and Hake, pp. 260 ff.

<sup>22</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 6b, 7b; *Dispatches*, XVII, 47-50.

<sup>23</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 10b.

Ch'ang Chien bridge was seized.<sup>24</sup> Of these losses the Chungwang writes:

The loss of Yu-hua-t'ai threw Nanking into great trouble and trepidation and the T'ien-wang sent me orders to return as soon as possible. . . . Ho-chow soon fell, Kiangpoo followed its example and our troops were in serious disorder. . . . After my return General Tseng carried our remaining stockades at the Yu-hua-t'ai, and rendered them so impregnable, as to defeat any possibility of their recapture. Our troops, minus rations and having no spot whereon to plant themselves, dispersed to Soochow and Hang-chow, and altogether I lost 100,000 men. Thus the nation was endangered by this loss attributable to me alone.<sup>25</sup>

Under such conditions the Chungwang urged that Nanking be abandoned, since it was no longer tenable under the circumstances. He pointed out that he had no way to shake off General Tsêng, who held the approaches to the city on the south, east, and west. At a greater distance from the city the grain roads were also blocked by the imperialists. But the T'ienwang grew angry and severely reproached his faithful lieutenant for such a suggestion when God Himself had given the control of empire into his hands and would defend His son to the end.<sup>26</sup>

While Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan was thus slowly encircling the city, Pao Ch'ao received orders to return to the Ningkuo region, and the efforts of Kiang Chung-i drove the rebels entirely out of Kiangsi (August 16).<sup>27</sup> These defeated forces went down the river, stopping to attack a town called Ch'ingyang which was defended by Chu P'ing-lung for thirty-eight days. At the end of this time, having received reinforcements, Chu was able to give battle in which the rebels were defeated with great losses and compelled to retire to Shit'ai and Taiping.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 8 f.; *Dispatches*, XVIII, 67-69.

<sup>25</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 55.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 55 f.

<sup>27</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 9-11.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 12b, 14a.

Miao P'ei-lin still evaded capture in northern Anhui, where he held the Hwai River, thus blocking the roads over which the salt came and endangering the revenues which supported a part of the army. Inasmuch as the salt supplies for Hupeh, Hunan, and Kiangsi were allotted to the salt fields of Anhui, and the presence of rebels along the lines of communication interrupted the traffic, these provinces had for some time been forced to secure their salt from Ssuch'uan, Kwangtung, and Chekiang. Tsêng, as viceroy, was trying to restore the customary arrangements in order to secure once more the revenues from that source. Hence the ability of Miao P'ei-lin to defy him was doubly annoying, particularly in view of the fact that four armies were trying to bring him to action. Tsêng therefore suggested the unifying of the four separate commands under Chin Kwo-ch'en.<sup>29</sup> It was not until December that Miao was finally defeated and Hwaiyuän captured.

In Chekiang the converging policy was given a great impetus by the capture of Fuyang, September 20, by combined Chinese and French efforts. Since this was the key to Hangchow its loss is thus bitterly described by the Chungwang:<sup>30</sup>

The troops at Chin-hua, Lung-yu, Yen-chow, Wen-chow and T'ai-chow successively retired upon Fu-yang, which Tso Fu-tai attacked with a large force for several months without success, when the aid of devil soldiers was again invoked to operate by water. The place was bombarded by the devils, who had several engagements with us, but, being repulsed throughout, they brought up reinforcements to their assistance, and Tso Fu-tai likewise increased his men, and this city ultimately fell. The devils having received their reward in hard cash for the capture

<sup>29</sup> *Dispatches*, XIX, 36 f. (October 9).

<sup>30</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 58. See *Journal North China Branch Royal Asiatic Society*, December, 1864, p. 120; *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, XVI, 8b-10a.

of Fu-yang then returned to Ningpo. The defeated forces at Shao-hing and Siao-shan retired to Yu-hang, where they entrenched themselves and threw up works. They were attacked incessantly by Governor Tso, and daily fights took place. Our object was to keep a firm hold on Yu-hang, as affording a guarantee for the safety and security of Hangchow. Governor Tso, with a naval and military force, then proceeded to Hangchow.

His lines extended from Yuhang to the West Lake, a distance of thirty miles.

In November the insurgents in southern Anhui were weakened by the defection of one of their commanders, Ku Lung-hsien, at Shit'ai. This made it necessary for them to evacuate this region.<sup>31</sup> In Kiangsu, as we have already seen, the "Ever Victorious Army" and General Ch'en had been steadily pushing their way towards Nanking, capturing Soochow and driving the Chungwang back to Ch'angchow and Tanyang.<sup>32</sup> The Shiwang, Li Shih-sien, was at Liyang Hsien, about sixty miles southeast of Nanking, whither he was trying to bring his cousin in the hope of detaching him from the T'ienwang's cause.<sup>33</sup>

Everything pointed to the early capture of the beleaguered city. Throughout the autumn the cordon was more and more tightly drawn about the walls. Finally, on the eighteenth of December, a mine was exploded under the wall, but the Taipings were strong enough to keep their opponents from entering through the breach. Of this attempt the Chungwang wrote:<sup>34</sup>

In the 11th month of last year, when General Tsêng blew up part of the wall near the south gate, the troops in the city had then sufficient food, and, with the creek intervening, were able

<sup>31</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 16; *Dispatches*, XIX, 68-70, 72, 77.

<sup>32</sup> Chapter XII.

<sup>33</sup> *Autobiography*, p. 60. This is implied from the fact that he was already at odds with the T'ienwang and did in fact soon take his departure for Kiangsi.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.



to repel the imperialist assault. But after this changes took place and the city became harassed more and more every day. Great fear and alarm were prevalent in the city, and there was no one on whom reliance could be placed for the safe keeping of the city or fortifications. In the event of any dispatch from the enemy being picked up and opened without the fact being reported to the Tien-wang, the offender, with the whole of his family, was sure to be executed. When General Tsêng drew his lines closer round the city, a severe mandate was issued by the Tien-wang to the effect that anyone holding treacherous correspondence with the enemy, and any one failing to report the fact, when conscious that such correspondence was going on, should be treated as an accessory and dealt with in the same manner as the offender, that is, be either pounded to pieces or be flayed alive. Who was not afraid of death in this form? Every one must have been.

In spite of such cruel penalties it is probable that the number of those who would have abandoned the cause of the T'ienwang was very great had it not been for the fear of death by torture at the hands of the imperialists. This fear was increased by the execution of the surrendered *wangs* at Soochow. "But three days had not elapsed after their surrender of Soochow before they were killed by Li Fu-tai, a measure which has since then deterred other chiefs, who would have surrendered, from doing so."<sup>85</sup>

On December 20 the Chungwang entered the Celestial Capital to lay the desperate condition of things before the T'ienwang and endeavor to get his consent to remove to Kiangsi or elsewhere. The T'ienwang, still fatuously clinging to his claim of divine power, scorned the idea. The Chungwang, whether from pure loyalty or because his mother was in the power of the T'ienwang and he himself constantly surrounded by spies, elected to remain beside his doomed chief. A sortie on December 23 was

<sup>85</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 60.

thrown back by General Tsêng's army. Strong forces were holding all the important cities towards Chekiang and northeastern Kiangsi.<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless, with the pressure from Li Hung-chang and Tso Tsung-tang aided by their "devil soldiers," the Taiping hold on places west of Soochow became so precarious that a constant melting away of their armies into Kiangsi became unavoidable. The Shiwang, Li Shi-hsien, failing to get his cousin to join him, went independently to Kiangsi, passing through Ningkuohsien on February 14, 1864. The imperialists were not strong enough to bar his way, though they were able to prevent his forces from doing any mischief as they went along. Tsêng's chief cause of anxiety now was lest the thousands of rebels in Huchow and other towns in Kiangsu and Chekiang might make a sudden dash for Kiangsi when their positions became untenable. The beheading of the *wangs* at Soochow had apparently convinced the rebels that their only recourse was in scattering out to meet at some distant rendezvous.

By way of precaution Hsi Pao-t'ien was sent to the prefectures of Fukien and Kienchang (Kiangsi), and Pao Ch'ao in the direction of Huchow, directly across the lake from Soochow, while the emperor was asked to command the provinces of Fukien, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Hupeh, and Hunan to devise measures for their own defence.<sup>37</sup> But not a man was removed from Nanking, where at most fifty thousand held a line of about thirty miles encircling that vast city, within which supplies were rapidly giving out. A sortie was expected at any moment.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 17b; *Dispatches*, XIX, 85, 91 ff.

<sup>37</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 21.

<sup>38</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 21b. The walls themselves are about twenty-two miles in circumference.

About the first of April some four thousand women were sent out of the city in the hope that they could secure food from the imperialists, the supplies doled out by the Chungwang having come to an end. In this crisis the T'ienwang had won the contempt of his followers when they laid the case before him, by suggesting that the starving folk live on "sweet dew," by which he meant the natural products of the earth. "In concert with others," records the Chungwang, "I then represented that such was not a fit article for food, upon which the T'ien-wang observed, 'Bring some here and after preparing it I will partake of some first.' No one, however, complying with this he gathered several herbs from his own palace garden and having made them up into a ball, he sent the ball outside with orders to the people to prepare their food in like manner."<sup>39</sup>

While Nanking thus grew weaker, General Ch'en took Kiahsing (Kashing) on March 20, but was himself wounded and died at Soochow a little later. Tso Tsung-tang's combined Franco-Chinese forces recaptured Hangchow on March 31, its defenders escaping to Huchow. The great mass of rebels then made good their retreat into Kiangsi as planned, despite desperate resistance. Reinforcements were sent to the Poyang region and Kiu-kiang.<sup>40</sup> About the same time the Nienfei and Taipings were defeated in Fanch'eng, Hupeh, and driven back into Honan.

This retreat of the rebels into Kiangsi soon made its effect felt on the *likin* revenues on which Tsêng depended for support. From his dispatches asking for aid we are able to learn how his armies were chiefly supported. Hunan, through a special bureau and the grant of half her *likin* taxes, was doing all she could and her contribu-

<sup>39</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, pp. 67 f.; also see pp. 62 f.

<sup>40</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 22-24.

tions were regular. From Kwangtung only 90,000 *taels* had come during the year, the Kiangsu revenues from *likin* had fallen to 30,000 *taels*, and nothing whatever had been forwarded from Ssuch'uan and Hupeh (Hupeh was pledged to furnish 50,000 *taels* per month, Hunan 25,000, Ssuch'uan 50,000, Kiangsi 30,000, and the other two provinces indefinite sums).<sup>41</sup> Tsêng was greatly embarrassed by these failures.

In Kiangsu the "Ever Victorious Army" brought its career to an honorable end by aiding in the capture of Ch'angchow, May 11. Tanyang thus became untenable and was evacuated on May 18, leaving nothing between Li Hung-chang's forces and Nanking. The defeated rebels escaped into Kiangsi.<sup>42</sup> During June strong imperialist forces were operating in that province under such leaders as Yang Yoh-ping and Pao Ch'ao, chiefly in the region of Shuichow, in order to prevent a consolidation of all the retreating Taipings.<sup>43</sup>

Throughout the winter and spring the spectacular successes of Li Hung-chang and Tso Tsung-tang, contrasted with his own lack of results at Nanking, had preyed on the mind of the younger Tsêng. The elder brother was placed in an impossible situation as well. On the one hand, General Tsêng seemed to be jealously apprehensive lest he lose the glory of capturing Nanking; while on the other, Tsêng Kuo-fan feared that his own honor and that of his family would be tarnished if he did not bring the strength of Li Hung-chang and Tso Tsung-tang to bear on Nanking so as to expedite its capture. He was so worried over the matter that early in February he informed his brother that he had sent for General Ch'en Hsueh-chi

<sup>41</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 25 f.; *Dispatches*, XX, 49-51.

<sup>42</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 25 f.

<sup>43</sup> *Dispatches*, XX, 70b, 71.

and if necessary he would invite Li Hung-chang himself to come to Nanking.<sup>44</sup>

His dilemma was not lightened by the fact that word came through spies of prevailing panic within the city. They reported that the T'ienwang had surrounded himself with firewood with which he planned to burn himself should the city fall.<sup>45</sup> At the end of March Tsêng wrote home that the melon was almost ready to cut.<sup>46</sup> Early in May another letter records that many of the rebels were shaving their heads and no longer killing people or starting fires, because they were preparing to scatter out and lose themselves among the population.<sup>47</sup> His apprehension that the delays were injurious to his family's honor combated the fear that his brother, through excess of eagerness, might overshoot his bolt and fail to take advantage of any sudden chance presented by the adversaries. In warning he wrote: "Since the capture of Soochow and Hangchow there has been a keen desire for the capture of Nanking. I myself am not so concerned about its early capture as about its safe capture. Therefore I have written you several tens of letters enjoining caution. Hung and Nanking are entirely different from other persons and places. I am worried for fear that in your over haste you may wear yourself out and your soldiers may be too exhausted to seize the opportunity when the mine is sprung."<sup>48</sup> To his brother at home he wrote: "Ch'angchow has been recaptured, also Tanyang. In the whole of Kiangsu only the one city of Nanking remains uncaptured. Our younger brother Yuan is terribly worried and his agitation is deep. I am constantly writing him letters to dispel it."<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Letter to Kuo-ch'üan, February 3, 1864.

<sup>45</sup> *Home Letters*, March 21, 1864.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, March 31, 1864.

<sup>47</sup> *Home Letters*, May 11, 1864.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, May 8, 1864.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, May 19, 1864.

As the days went on Tsêng's position became infinitely more difficult when from all sides came hints that Nanking could be taken if the unemployed forces of Li Hung-chang were brought to the spot. Imperial mandates also ordered them forward. Tsêng, who had already called on Li Hung-chang for some of his command earlier in the year, now requested the governor to bring his entire force to Nanking. He also appealed to the reluctant younger brother to make the best of the situation and join in the invitation to Li Hung-chang. On June 15 he tells Kuo-ch'üan that he has already written to Li Hung-chang. Should Li come, the capture of the city will mean the sharing of honors, but failure to capture it will also imply the sharing of responsibility. To his brother at home he sends the same message, adding that although Kuo-ch'üan was ten years younger than he, he was already half gray, while the elder Tsêng grew weaker day by day, and neither of the two brothers could indulge the expectation of a long life. When at last he had persuaded the reluctant younger brother to join in the request to Li Hung-chang, he expressed his appreciation in these words: "Shao-ch'üan (Li Hung-chang) is willing to help us brothers finish the work, but still he does not dare to say so directly. His consideration is admirable. Your letter expressing your desire for him to come quickly is splendid. Gordon came today and he believes your fortifications are good and your discipline strict."

With admirable delicacy of feeling Li Hung-chang perceived the difficulties of his superior at Anking, and, alleging the shallow pretext of giving aid in Chekiang—where Tso Tsung-tang was in no need of help—begged off from coming. Tsêng Kuo-fan reveals no displeasure in this decision which enabled him to "save his face." In a letter of July 13 he wrote in appreciation: "I have read Li Hung-chang's letters and his memorials have

been sent to me, and I understand from these memorials and letters that he is altogether determined not to come to Nanking to join in the attack. If he realises your bitter suffering and does not feel urged to share the coming glory, and is able wisely to hold thus to his purpose, he far surpasses others." However mixed Li Hung-chang's motives may have been in this act of renunciation, it enabled Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan to win the coveted honor of taking the rebel stronghold and bound Tsêng Kuo-fan to him by a debt of gratitude for his courtesy and tact. It may have been inspired in part by gratitude for the support already received from Tsêng, whereby Li had so rapidly risen to the position of governor, and in part by prudence, lest he offend two such powerful men as the Tsêngs and the Hunan group among whom he, as an Anhui man, might be regarded more or less as an inter-loper.

Indeed, the two Tsêngs were now growing almost too powerful, and they themselves realised it. As early as May 1 Tsêng had written to his younger brother: "I have asked for sick leave, first, because I have been at the head of affairs too long and I fear that in China and abroad they will suspect that my military power is too great and my chance for profit too good, and they may attempt to curb me in some way; second, when Kinling falls we brothers must subside somewhat."<sup>50</sup>

If Li Hung-chang did not wish to be involved in any unpleasantness regarding Nanking, there was no hint of disloyalty in his attitude, nor did he ignore Tsêng's call for help, at any rate financially. A sum of 238,000 *taels* arrived to help defray Tsêng's huge expenses. Of this sum 50,000 went to Pao Ch'ao in Kiangsi, 40,000 were retained for the commissariat in Anking, and 130,000 went

<sup>50</sup> Also compare letter of May 18 to the same effect.

to Nanking for the support of the besieging army there. Even this amount was insufficient.<sup>51</sup>

On July 3, 1864, Lung Potzu Shan (Dragon's Shoulder Hill) was captured, giving Tseng Kuo-ch'ian the ability to dig his mine despite the resistance of the rebels within the walls. This was ready on the nineteenth. Its explosion made a breach of more than two hundred feet, through which the imperialists poured, cutting their way into the city. Immediate siege was laid to the imperial city within; it fell the same evening. Word was sent speeding to Peking by a courier travelling seven hundred *li* per day.<sup>52</sup>

For three days and nights the imperialists gave themselves up to pursuing and slaughtering the defeated Taipings, nor did they stop before a hundred thousand had perished.<sup>53</sup> The Chungwang and the younger brother of the T'ienwang, Hung Jen-tah, were captured as they were attempting to escape to Kiangsi, but the T'ienwang was beyond their reach, having committed suicide on the first of June when he realised that matters had become hopeless. News of the suicide had been kept from the populace who were already on the verge of panic, and within the recesses of the palace the lost leader was buried and his son, Hung Fu-t'ien proclaimed as T'ienwang in place of his father.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>51</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 28b, 29a; *Dispatches*, XX, 70.

<sup>52</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 30; *Dispatches*, XX, 77-83. Translations of the dispatches about the fall of Nanking are given in the appendix to the Chungwang's *Autobiography*.

<sup>53</sup> *Dispatches*, XX, 83. Later British estimates of the number slaughtered would reduce the number here given. Tseng possibly refers to the numbers hunted down in the country outside Nanking as well as within the walls.

<sup>54</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 27; Chungwang, *Autobiography*, p. 70. The translator is wrong in dating the suicide on June 30, the *Nienp'u* and the Chinese version of the Chungwang's *Autobiography* agreeing on June 1. Of this young T'ienwang an edict issued in August, 1860, had said that he was God's grandson. See Brine, *The Taiping Rebellion in China*, pp. 266 f. The account of the capture of Nanking says that the T'ienwang was buried not in a coffin but in his imperial robes.



For some time the young T'ienwang eluded the imperialists who were trying to capture him. In the hour of disaster he was mounted on a poor animal but received the good horse of the Chungwang, thus being able to escape while the abler but less fortunate Chungwang was captured. The Chungwang records of him: "The new Sovereign was but a youth, unacquainted with state matters and with no intellectual genius sufficient to cope with difficulties." "After my defeat at the Taiping gate I returned to the Palace gate, where the Young King, together with the other two sons of the Tien-wang, came to me and asked what was to be done. I was at this time in a great dilemma and really at a loss to proceed, and was obliged to discard attention to all save the Young King. To him I gave my war horse (pony), as he was without one, and rode myself a weak and useless animal. . . . Though the Tien-wang's days had been fulfilled, the nation injured through others baffling and deceiving him, and the state lost, still, as I had received his favours, I could not do otherwise than evince my faithfulness by endeavouring to save his son." After one or two frustrated efforts they sallied out at one in the morning; though they succeeded in penetrating the lines of the imperialists, a hue and cry was set up and they were pursued. They scattered, and the Chungwang never knew what became of his master whom he would not abandon.<sup>55</sup>

On the arrival of Tsêng Kuo-fan (July 28) careful inquiries were made into the condition of affairs in the city. The Chungwang, Li Siu-ch'eng, and the brother of the late T'ienwang, Hung Jen-tah, were brought before the two Tsêngs and some other generals, and were condemned to death, despite the fact that the edict of the emperor had called for their transport to Peking. It was at this time that the autobiography was composed, which

<sup>55</sup> Chungwang. *Autobiography*, pp. 70 f.

in an altered form was later translated and published. The alterations consisted in the omission of the flattering references to the Hunan troops, the proposals for securing the allegiance of the Taipings still at large in ransom for his life, and his analysis of the causes for the downfall of the T'ienwang's cause.<sup>56</sup>

Tsêng was greatly disappointed to discover no store of treasures in the rebel capital. Inquiry brought out the fact that there had been nothing of the kind, the so-called Sacred Treasury being simply the repository of the T'ienwang's private wealth. If there ever had actually been treasures the fleeing rebels had carried them away. Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan desired to make the soldiers of his own army give up the loot they had taken from the persons of soldiers and the houses of the people, but Kuo-fan objected, arguing that "as the loot obtained by the braves and soldiers was not in the same ratio, some having possessed themselves of a great deal and some of very little, if each were compelled to deliver up a certain amount the feeble would suffer punishment and nothing be obtained; and the strong would be mutinous and desert. In fine, that such a measure would not have for its result the acquirement of funds, but would injure the national dignity to no purpose and would disappoint the military spirits."<sup>57</sup> He therefore ordered that only buried treasures should be brought in.

In the distribution of rewards General Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan was created an earl of the first grade and granted a double-eyed peacock feather. Yang Yoh-ping, now viceroy of Shensi and Kansu, became a baronet and Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent. P'eng Yu-ling received similar honors and Pao Ch'ao was made a baronet. Other

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>57</sup> *Dispatches*, XX, 33b, 34a. Translation in appendix of *Chungwang, Autobiography*.

officers also received suitable rewards in the general distribution. Li Hung-chang became an earl of the first grade with a double-eyed peacock feather. The imperial rescript concerning Tsêng Kuo-fan reads as follows:

The Imperial Commissioner, Under Secretary of State, and Viceroy of the Two Kiang, Tsêng-kuo-fan, in the 4th year of Heen-fung, set on foot the volunteer movement in Hoo-nan and built several war boats. He obtained great successes in Hoo-nan and captured Wu-ch'ang and Han-yang, and cleared Kiang-se of rebels; and since his operations eastwards has passed through Su-sung, captured Chien-shan and Tai-hu, and occupied Ch'i-mun, from which place he effected the recovery of Ngan-king, making that place the base of operations for the conquest of the Lower Valley. He has fortunately so achieved his work as to cut up the original abettor of the mischief, and has on the whole shown his competence to select men suited to the exigencies of the time, and that he is possessed of great military tactics. We now, therefore, of Our favor confer on Tsêng-Kuo-fan the title of Senior Guardian of the Heir Apparent, and create him a Marquis of the first grade, which is to be hereditary, and We moreover reward him with a double-eyed peacock's feather.<sup>58</sup>

The fall of Nanking brought the leaders of the rebellion to destruction, but remnants of the nation under different officers or *wangs* were gathered in other centers, notably in Kiangsi and Chekiang, and along the Hupeh-Anhui borders, where joint raids of the Nienfei and Taipings disturbed the countrysides. The Kiangsi rebels were defeated by Pao Ch'ao (August 7) at Hsuwan in Fuchow prefecture with a loss of forty thousand. In the next few days several district cities were occupied and several thousands of rebels submitted. The mass of homeless Taipings moved towards the southern border of the province, where the southern prefectures and the adjoin-

<sup>58</sup> Chungwang, *Autobiography*, appendix, pp. 91 ff. (Spelling as in the English translation.)

ing provinces of Fukien and Kwangtung kept a careful watch for them.<sup>59</sup>

In Chekiang Tso Tsung-tang, with the aid of Li Hung-chang and the French contingent, captured the last great stronghold of the rebels, Huchow, on the twenty-eighth of August, and on the following day the capture of Anchihsien completed the pacification of that province.<sup>60</sup>

The young T'ienwang, who, through the loyalty of the Chungwang, eluded the imperialist vigilance at the fall of Nanking, arrived in Kwangteh, Anhui, August 8, and there received a great welcome from his fellow rebels.<sup>61</sup> With the fall of that city on August 30 he was compelled to flee to the hills in Ningkuo. On the first of September the fugitive Taipings from Huchow and Kwangteh escaped towards Huichow, the prefecture in the southern tip of Anhui, where they were met and defeated by Liu Sung-shan. Tso Tsung-tang likewise extinguished a band of them in the districts of Changhwa and Shunan, September 3, and other groups suffered a similar fate during that month. All the defeated bands of rebels, including their young T'ienwang, were met by combined Chekiang and Kiangsi forces in Kwanghsin prefecture and again overthrown. The T'ienwang, who had slipped away from the battle field, was pursued and captured by Hsi Pao-t'ien, October 25, and sent to Nanch'ang where he was beheaded.<sup>62</sup> By the end of October all the Taipings in Kiangsi were driven into Fukien and Kwangtung.

<sup>59</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 39b.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* The *Journal* North China Branch Royal Asiatic Society mentions the French contingent alone as having captured the city December, 1864, p. 120.

<sup>61</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 34a.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, IX, 36-39, *passim*. *Dispatches*, XXI, 12 ff., gives a complete account of the escape of the young T'ienwang, explaining the circumstances and the measures taken to apprehend him. The same volume, pp. 30 ff., covers most of the battles here recorded.

With this we may regard the Taiping rebellion as practically suppressed. Some of the rebels did, however, operate for a time in Kwangtung and Fukien. From Kiayinchow, which they captured in Kwangtung, they continued their depredations in connection with those who had gone into Fukien, ravaging the prefectures of T'ingchow and Changchow. This necessitated the return of Tso Tsung-tang to Chuchow (Chekiang), whence he dispatched forces into Fukien to oppose them. These rebels were apparently under the command of the Shiwang, Li Shi-hsien, brother of the Chungwang. Early in 1865 Tso led his army in person and captured Changchow about May 25.<sup>63</sup> Although the Shiwang escaped from his clutches at this time and fled into the mountains, he presently emerged from his retirement and committed suicide.<sup>64</sup> On his way to join the Shiwang, Burgevine also met his end.<sup>65</sup>

This victory at Changchow and another not far away cleared Fukien of rebels. Those who remained of the Kwangsi and Kwangtung men escaped over the border to Kwangtung.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>63</sup> *Nienp'u*, IX, 42b, 44b.

<sup>64</sup> *Unofficial History of the Taiping T'ien Kuo*, XIII, 23.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, XVIII, 6. Morse, II, 88, states that Burgevine was captured at the fall of this city.

<sup>66</sup> *Nienp'u*, X, 10b. Moule, *Personal Recollections of the T'ai-ping Rebellion*, p. 1, says that about 100,000 of them settled in the southwest of China, where they were quiet enough if unmolested but showed fight if interfered with. He adds that these last remnants were finally driven out into Tongking, where they became the main force of the Black Flags. A grandson of Tsêng Kuo-fan informs the writer that numbers of them emigrated to America and worked on the railways there.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE NANKING VICEROYALTY; THE NIEN REBELS

LEAVING the scattered Taipings, some of them in remote places in southeastern China and others across the ocean in the United States,<sup>1</sup> we find Tsêng with much satisfaction taking up the duties of a viceroy in the capital of his late enemies. As noted in the last chapter, he was greatly disappointed to find none of the treasure that rumor had stored in Nanking. Without it, however, he managed to make the necessary repairs to the viceroy's yamen and to set up civil government where for many years martial law had prevailed. Among his first cares was the pleasant task of restoring the examinations which had been so long suspended.<sup>2</sup> His Hunan soldiers were disbanded in part and the others scattered under independent commands, doubtless with the thought which he had on a number of occasions expressed to his brother, that after the capture of Nanking they must subside a little lest they remain too powerful and become the targets for intrigue and opposition.<sup>3</sup>

If there was no more trouble to be feared from the Taiping rebellion, the Nien rebels were more powerful than ever. They absorbed the northern and western bands of scattered Taipings and became a serious menace in

<sup>1</sup> Information given me by a grandson of Tsêng Kuo-fan.

<sup>2</sup> *Record of Chief Events*, III, 16b, 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Nienp'u*, X, 7a. Cf. *Letters for 1864*.

the regions south of the Yellow River and in northern Hupeh and Anhui, from the borders of Shensi to the Grand Canal and beyond into Shantung. For many years they had troubled the imperial government, who feared lest they should join forces with the Taiping rebels. It is not clear just how they arose or what their purpose was. Their methods of fighting incline one to think that they were simply bandits, who, owing to the prevailing disorder, had gained unusual strength. If they cherished any desire to set up a rival government or aimed at anything higher than plunder, the fact is successfully obscured. At this time they were grouped under four chiefs, Chang Tsung-yu, Jen Chu, Niu Hung, and Lai Wenkwang, of whom the last named had come over from the Taiping forces. Their number, though large, was uncertain.

They went about accompanied by their women and beasts of burden; and were entirely devoid of firearms, which made it difficult if not impossible for them to capture walled cities where any resistance was offered. They carried no tents and had no permanent encampments, but if night overtook them they scattered to the near-by villages or as opportunity afforded captured places necessary for their forces. They were able to move with incredible swiftness, more than thirty miles a day for many days in succession. Whenever their enemies, the imperial forces, came too close for comfort, they managed to wear them out by marching in circles and darting about this way and that like swarms of ants. As a rule they avoided battle with the troops sent against them, certainly never attacking first. Yet when driven to bay they fought with surpassing bravery. Each of the four chief bands was accompanied by several thousand horsemen armed with heavy swords and long clubs with which they could do great damage. In times of difficulty these horsemen were

thrown around the others to ward off attacks or to protect the flanks of their own battling footmen. These footmen wielded heavy pikes with deadly effect.<sup>4</sup>

For many years Tsêng and his generals had been in constant fear lest they join the Taipings in Hupeh or Anhui, giving the latter sufficient strength to overcome the imperialists. After the defeat of Senkolintsin by the Allies in 1860 that Mongol prince had been commissioned to disperse these Nien rebels, only to meet his death in an ambushade, May 18, 1865. This reverse made them so dangerous<sup>5</sup> that a hurried mandate summoned Tsêng Kuo-fan to Shantung to direct operations against them.<sup>6</sup>

This command came as a blow to one who, after several years of hard, uncertain warfare, had achieved victory and was settled down to the reward of a peaceful rule in a quiet capital. He well understood what a task was before him. He was without many soldiers, whether Hunanese or Anhui men. The Nien rebels were strong in cavalry where he had none. Months of preparation would be required to strengthen his army and secure cavalry, and when all this was done as many as thirteen bases of operation would have to be occupied, stretching across a thousand *li*. These matters he set forth in his first memorial (of May 29) adding that he was not very well and preferred not to head so great an undertaking.<sup>7</sup> This memorial was merely the polite refusal etiquette demanded. On the same day he wrote home saying that he intended starting towards the end of the Chinese moon

<sup>4</sup> *Nienp'u*, X, 11a. *Home Letters*, June 4, 1866, and January 27, 1867.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, X, 5b. It is probable that they were now reinforced by many of the defeated Taipings and other malcontents.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, X, 6b.

<sup>7</sup> *Nienp'u*, X, 7, 8. One reason why Anhui men were preferred to those from Hunan was that they were better inured to the cold and could subsist on a wheat ration. *Home Letters*, October 29, 1869.



with eight thousand Hunanese and fourteen thousand Anhui men, but ten days later he had arranged to take nine thousand Hunanese and twenty-two thousand Anhui troops.<sup>8</sup> Upon receiving the imperial confirmation of his orders, which conferred on him supreme command in the provinces of Shantung, Chihli, and Honan, he set out on June 18, reaching his chief base at Hsuehow on September 23.

He now divided his forces among four chief centers. Chining became the center for operations in Shantung, under P'an Ting-sing; Hsuehow for Kiangsu, under Chang Shu-sheng.<sup>9</sup> For Honan, Chowkiak'ow, and for Anhui, Linghwai, under Liu Min-ch'üan and Liu Sungshan, served as bases. A whole year was consumed in effecting an organisation large enough and sufficiently distributed to draw a net about the elusive rebels. Generals who achieved fame in the Taiping rebellion were recalled to Tsêng's side, among them Pao Ch'ao and Kuo Sung-lin, with their veterans. In 1866 Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan was summoned from his retirement, first with a commission as governor of Shensi, but afterwards designated to Hupeh. Thus the two brothers and Li Hung-chang, governor of Kiangsu and acting viceroy in Tsêng's absence, were able to coöperate once more.<sup>10</sup> In spite of all they could do, however, the rebels continued to elude them, moving as they desired between the Grand Canal and the boundaries of Shensi, now massing in Hupeh under all four leaders, and again separating into two bands to operate in the east and west. Early in 1867 Tsêng wrote to his brother: "We have fifty thousand men in our various armies without counting the men under

<sup>8</sup> *Home Letters*, May 29 and June 8, 1865.

<sup>9</sup> *Record of Chief Events*, IV, *passim*; *Nienp'u*, X, 14a; *Dispatches*, July 23, 1865.

<sup>10</sup> Letter of January 25, 1867.

Yu-ch'üan [Li Hung-chang's brother], and cannot make the slightest progress. It is extremely annoying. Can it be that the heart of Heaven perhaps does not wish to destroy these rebels? Else the methods used by our side in dealing with the rebels are not good." In another letter he writes: "The Nienfei suddenly appear and as quickly disappear—a hundred *li* in the flash of an eye! The reports of the spies are very uncertain. Being without definite information, I have not been able to turn and go everywhere. On the contrary there is nothing to do but take the word of each leader, allowing him to be his own spy, have full control, go or stop at will, with plans adapted to the circumstances."<sup>11</sup>

Tsêng's discouragement was matched by the glee of the censors who were watching these failures to bring reproach and possibly dismissal upon him. Attacks were made on him for incompetence, and some added pride and recklessness to the charges, with the hope that the emperor would depose him. This the government refused to do, but the fact that the attacks could be made against one who but recently had been so highly honored, shows how far Tsêng's star had passed its ascendancy. Tsêng had, prior to this, considered withdrawing from active life, at least for a time, but now, on the advice of Li Hung-chang, he decided to hold his office in the teeth of his enemies, lest after a period of rest he be again summoned to a distasteful military task.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless he did offer his resignation from office, but was, instead, granted leave of absence and transferred back to his post at Nanking, leaving Li Hung-chang, who had joined him, to carry on active operations in the field with the imperial commissioner's seal. On his return to Nanking Tsêng was received by the populace

<sup>11</sup> Letters of January 23 and 25, 1867.

<sup>12</sup> *Nienp'u*, XI, 14b, 15a; Letters of March 8-10, 1867.

with great enthusiasm. But his return to this civil post served rather to the advancement of Li Hung-chang than of Tsêng, because the former now became the actual commander-in-chief and reaped the benefits of the careful preparations Tsêng had been making for almost two years. Not long after Tsêng's departure for Nanking, Pao Ch'ao, who had been pushing forward against the western group of Nien, won a signal victory near Siangyang, Hupeh, followed shortly by another at Hung Lo Ho. With heavy losses, totalling ten thousand, the rebels were glad to escape into Honan.<sup>13</sup> Li Hung-chang, who was now the titular viceroy of Hukwang (with his brother acting), moved his headquarters to Chowchiak'ow.

The arrival of Tso Tsung-tang (during May, 1867) in Shensi-Kansu, of which he had been appointed viceroy the previous autumn, brought the chief leaders of the Taiping days once more together against the Nien.<sup>14</sup> The presence of Tsêng Kuo-fan at Nanking, Li Hung-chang in the field, Li Han-chang and Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan at Wuchang, Kwan Wen (former viceroy of Hukwang) in Chihli, and Tso Tsung-tang in Shensi-Kansu, gave assurance of full support and speedy victory; for now eight provinces with their revenues were behind the operations which Li was carrying on, whereas Tsêng the year before had little more than half that number at his back. In the month of June the divisions of Chang and Jen went eastward into Shantung. Li hurled the whole force of four provinces against them. By November Jen and his band were brought to book, and on January 4, 1868, through the beheading of their leader, Lai Wen-kwang, the entire eastern area was pacified, with the exception of the division under Chang Tsung-yu, which entered Chihli early in 1868, to the consternation of the capital. Both Li Hung-chang and Tso Tsung-tang entered the province in pur-

<sup>13</sup> *Nienp'u*, XI, 16a.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 18a.

suit of them.<sup>15</sup> From Chihli they passed, in the fourth moon (April 23-May 19), into Shantung, where the swollen rivers prevented the imperialists from capturing them until the seventh moon. Then their leader, Chang Tsung-yu, was taken and the rebellion quelled. Tsêng's memorial announcing the complete crushing of the Nien-fei was dated September 8, 1867.<sup>16</sup>

Neither Tsêng nor his brother was as conspicuous now as they had been four years earlier, although as viceroy of the Two Kiang supporting Li Hung-chang the former shared in the honors and rewards. Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan, however, was no longer in office. He had become discouraged with the difficulties of the governorship of Hu-peh, and his pride would not brook the fire of criticism levelled against him by reason of his lack of success. So he had retired to his native province in October, 1867. In this incident the contrast in character between the two Tsêngs comes out strikingly. The elder brother had many times met with failure and loss of face, only to persevere until he brought victory out of defeat; and in these days of damaged prestige his letters were full of encouragement to the younger man. Thus in April, 1867, when Kuo-ch'üan was at the point of resigning, he tells his brother that the prospect of defeat is something that he himself has endured many times, only to grow the stronger for having passed through the experience. "The two great defeats you have sustained," he writes, "may be Heaven polishing its hero in preparation for a great advance. The proverb says 'By each humiliation you endure, your knowledge is that much enlarged.' My greatest progress has been in the periods when I suffered defeat and shame. Under such circumstances one should grit his teeth, discipline his will, collect his spirit and stretch his wisdom—by no means must he faint and in-

<sup>15</sup> *Nienp'u*, XI, 21b.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, XI, 22-24.

dulge himself."<sup>17</sup> To no purpose did he instance the occasions when he had suffered humiliations and endured them.<sup>18</sup> In vain did he remind his brother that the two had received high honor which caused them to stand out as the most prominent family in China, an honor which called for loyal service and devotion on their side.<sup>19</sup> Neither appeals to prove his mettle nor calls to follow the ideal of *noblesse oblige* could bring the younger Tsêng to face the trial. He went home, and later he reached high position, but never with the honor that today attaches to the fame of the more heroic elder brother.

As civil ruler in Nanking the routine matters of administration need not concern us here. The most permanent contribution made by Tsêng and his associates to the future welfare of China was the establishment of the iron works at Shanghai, whence later was to emerge the great Kiangnan Arsenal. While the Taiping rebellion was still under way, late in 1863, Yung Wing, the first modern Chinese to be educated abroad, came to the viceroy's *yamen* at Anking to urge on him the desirability of establishing works in China for the manufacture of steamers and machinery of various kinds. Tsêng was discovered to be open-minded and sympathetic, and Yung Wing was able to secure financial support from him. In 1866 he returned from abroad with the machinery, "a hundred and several tens of varieties," which late in January, 1867, was in its place.<sup>20</sup> During 1868 the new ironworks had set up the first steamer of any size built in China. The accomplishment of this enterprise led Tsêng to believe that such boats as he had hitherto used in his

<sup>17</sup> *Home Letters*, April 3, 1867.

<sup>18</sup> See *Home Letters*, April 6, April 11, April 16, May 15, May 23.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, June 23. The letters for that year end suddenly early in July.

<sup>20</sup> *Nienp'u*, XI, 14a; *Dispatches*, XXV, 43a.

military operations were destined soon to be antiquated and replaced by steam vessels, and that the Chinese navy as a whole, particularly the portion on the sea, should be modernised.<sup>21</sup> When the steamer was completed it was brought up to Nanking for inspection, and Tsêng gave it the name *T'ienchi*.<sup>22</sup> Though it measured but 185 feet in length (probably Chinese measurement), its completion was a milestone in China's progress. The ironworks where it was built then covered about twelve acres of ground and included departments for building engines, constructing machinery, smelting ore, making rifles, doing woodwork, casting brass and iron, and making rockets and other projectiles. There were many storehouses and offices. A dock for the repair of vessels was still lacking, and Tsêng realised also the pressing need for technical books translated from foreign languages.<sup>23</sup>

In the same year, 1868, occurred the Yangchow riot. On the twenty-second of August, after ample warnings of trouble and appeals to the prefect by the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor, a mob attacked the China Inland Mission buildings, recently rented and occupied by a number of missionaries, both men and women. They were accused of the usual crimes, kidnapping and putting to death children in order to use certain parts of their bodies for medicine. Since the authorities, despite many appeals, had failed to give protection, at least to property, it was generally believed among the foreign population of China

<sup>21</sup> *Nienp'u*, XI, 22b; *Dispatches*, XXV, 56 (April 23).

<sup>22</sup> This name was chosen by taking two characters from the phrase "The waves on the four seas are quiet, public affairs are tranquil." Prior to this Tsêng had experimented with machinery at Anking (1862) and had built a small steamer, but having only Chinese workmen, it was not a success. *Dispatches*, XXVII, 7 (October 17, 1868).

<sup>23</sup> *Dispatches*, XXVII, 27a. Tsêng does not claim the sole credit for the enterprise, for much of the preparation had been done by Li Hung-chang and his successor, Ting Jih-chang, then intendant of Shanghai.

that the gentry of the city were the real movers of the riot. In the settlement of the case the local officials did not seem disposed to take action, possibly for fear of the consequences to them. Tsêng appointed the provincial treasurer, Li Ts'ung-i, and two lower officers to settle the matter. In Peking the central government promised to make proper reparations, but the progress of the negotiations proving too slow, gunboats were sent up to Nanking and an ultimatum was served on Tsêng Kuo-fan and one of his steamers was seized—possibly the *T'ienchi*—whereupon the viceroy made immediate settlement of the case to the satisfaction of the British representative. But Tsêng's reputation was lowered in foreign eyes. Unfortunately the dispatches sent by Tsêng on the matter of the Yangchow riot are not among those published, and only casual references to the negotiations appear in his letters. We are therefore compelled to rely chiefly on unfriendly or at least *ex parte* foreign sources.<sup>24</sup> In view of Tsêng's attitude towards the settlement of the greater T'ientsin massacre two years later, it is probable that he was simply going cautiously and carefully forward with the case when the ultimatum came, and that he would have done justice here because the wrong was so apparent.

<sup>24</sup> My account had been taken chiefly from Morse, *International Relations*, II, 228.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE CHIH LI VICEROYALTY AND TSENG'S LAST DAYS

ABOUT the middle of September, 1868, Tsêng received orders transferring him to the viceroyalty of Chihli. On December 17 he set out, the populace of his capital thronging the streets through which he passed in enthusiastic recognition of his great popularity. Thirty-nine days later, such was the leisurely rate of travel by the available modes of conveyance then, he entered the capital. He was granted the honor of riding his horse through the forbidden city, and was received in audience on several different mornings, attending the court festivities in connection with the New Year.<sup>1</sup>

The interviews were held in the east room of the Yang Sin Tien, the emperor seated and facing the west, and the two empresses dowager under the yellow curtain behind, Ts'u An to the south and Ts'u Hsi to the north. The questions were all addressed to Tsêng by Ts'u Hsi, and those of the interviews of January 26 and 27 are as follows:<sup>2</sup>

Question. Have you finished all your affairs at Kiangnan?

Answer. They are all finished.

Q. Your braves are disbanded?

A. They are disbanded.

<sup>1</sup> *Nienp'u*, XI, 27-30.

<sup>2</sup> *Record of Chief Events*, IV, 3b, 4a. Tsu Hsi is the one who practically ruled China from then until her death in 1908.



- Q. How many have been dismissed?
- A. Twenty thousand have been discharged and about thirty thousand remain.
- Q. From what place do most of them come?
- A. The Anhui men are the most numerous. There are also some from Hunan, but only a few thousand. Those of Anhui preponderate.
- Q. Were they disbanded without trouble?
- A. Without trouble.
- Q. Did you come all the way in peace?
- A. It was quiet all along the way. At first I feared there might be trouble from wandering braves, but I arrived without any trouble.
- Q. How many years have you been absent from the capital?
- A. Your servant has been absent from the capital seventeen years.
- Q. How many years have you led soldiers?
- A. At first my only task was to lead soldiers. For the last two years, receiving the Emperor's grace, I have been an official in Kiangnan.
- Q. You were formerly in the Board of Rites?
- A. Your servant formerly had a position in the Board of Rites.
- Q. How many years were you in the Board?
- A. Four years. In the twenty-ninth year of Taokwang I entered on the office of vice president of the Board of Rites and in the second year of Hsienfung I left the capital.
- Q. Is Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan your full brother?
- A. He is your servant's full brother.
- Q. How many brothers are there of you?
- A. Your servants are five brothers. Two of them died in the camp. We have received special grace from the Emperor.  
[Kotows.]
- Q. Since you were formerly in Peking you must naturally be acquainted with the affairs of Chihli.
- A. Of the affairs of Chihli your servant does, indeed, know a little.
- Q. Chihli is utterly empty [of soldiers]. You will have to give very much care to drilling soldiers.

- A. Your servant's talents will probably not suffice to accomplish it.

Thereupon Tsêng kotowed and retired. The following morning he was again ushered into the same place and another set of questions and answers followed:

Q. How many steamers have you built?

A. I have built one, and a second is being built but is not yet completed.

Q. Do you employ foreign builders or not?

A. The foreign builders do not exceed six or seven in number; the number of Chinese builders is very great.

Q. Of what nationality are the foreign builders?

A. Both Englishmen and Frenchmen are employed.

Q. Have you recovered from your illness?

A. I am somewhat better. Two years ago I was very ill at Chowchiak'ow, but in the seventh and eighth moons last year I grew better.

Q. Do you take medicine or not?

A. I did take some. [Retires.]

After the Chinese New Year Tsêng went to Paotingfu, where he took up the duties of office, matters chiefly of a routine nature.

In 1870, however, occurred an event of prime importance in the relations between China and the Western world—the T'ientsin massacre. Beside it the riot in Yangchow two years before, and other outbreaks here and there, paled into insignificance, both in extent of damage done and of excitement caused in China and abroad. It is generally asserted by foreign writers that there was much uneasiness and a far-reaching wave of anti-foreign propaganda about this time which, through the neglect or even the instigation of officials, reached a climax and broke against the unlucky missionaries at T'ientsin.\*

\* This is the view of Cordier, *Histoire General de la Chine*, IV, 124 ff., who cites a number of cases of attack on Roman Catholic missions in 1868

On the face of it, the issue in T'ientsin was the question of the bewitching and kidnapping of children, some of whom were supposed to have been sold to the Roman Catholic orphanage, complicated with the monstrous allegation that the eyes and hearts torn from children were used in making medicines for such bewitching. Throughout the month of June, 1870, great excitement had been caused by the report that children were being kidnapped through sorcery. One of the men arrested on this charge, Wu Lan-chen, asserted in his testimony that the medicine he used came from a certain Wang San of the French Church. "From this the people of T'ientsin and the members of the church frequently came to blows. The Commissioner of Trade of the Three Ports, T'sung Hou, invited the French Consul, Fontanier, to come to his *yamen* and have the accused confronted. At this time serious rumours arose on all sides and the hearts of the people were greatly stirred. Fontanier in the *yamen* of T'sung Hou drew a revolver, and T'sung Hou hastily escaped. Fontanier went out in a rage and, meeting the magistrate of T'ientsin, Liu Ch'ieh, again used his revolver, wounding a servant. On witnessing this, the T'ientsin populace murdered Fontanier, burned churches in several places, and those that perished, foreigners and natives of that place who followed the religion, numbered several tens. These things happened on the 23d of the Fifth Moon [June 21]."<sup>a</sup> This is slightly different from the account given in the official report of Tsêng Kuo-fan on July 21, according to which the prefect and magistrate had gone to the church to examine Wang San, and the consul there drew his revolver

and 1869 in evidence. The French chargé constantly insisted throughout the negotiations on the culpability of the magistrate and prefect of T'ientsin for having failed to keep order when danger was known to threaten.

<sup>a</sup> The account given in the *Niênp'u*, XII, 3a, and b.

on them.<sup>6</sup> In any case, this was a serious blow to foreign relations, because the mob when once aroused had not been content to deal with the French consul or the Roman Catholic Church only, but had also murdered a few Russians and destroyed British and American property.<sup>6</sup>

The Chinese authorities acted with a speed equal to that of the foreign ministers in Peking, showing that they appreciated the gravity of the outrage. Two days after the massacre, orders were received by Tsêng to proceed to the scene and settle the case in conjunction with Ts'ung Hou. He did not, however, start for several days, not indeed until the fourth of July, though he dispatched two officials of *taotai* (or intendant) rank to make preliminary investigations, employing the intervening time for a careful study of the reports of officials in T'ientsin, that he might be prepared to meet the foreign representatives. The viceroy was ill at this time. On May 22 he had requested a month's sick leave and had renewed the request on the day before the massacre.<sup>7</sup> It was therefore from a sick bed that he rose to meet this new duty, and he was possessed of a fear that the difficulties of the task would cost him his life. In view of this apprehension he probably spent the interval, while underlings investigated the case at T'ientsin, in arranging his affairs for fear he should never return to Paotingfu. At any rate, he drew up a farewell letter to his sons, which opens as follows:

Today I am proceeding to T'ientsin to investigate and settle the case of the murder of foreigners and the burning of churches. The temper of foreign countries is passionate and the disposition of the T'ientsin populace is giddy and conceited. All in all, it will be hard to harmonise them; a bad spirit may be engendered, soldiers be brought on, and the matter may eventuate in

<sup>6</sup> *Dispatches*, XXIX, 38b.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, XXIX, 34.

<sup>7</sup> *Dispatches*, XXIX, 33.

a very great disturbance. In revolving over and over in my mind the question of this journey, I am unhappily without a single good plan. From the time I first recruited "braves" in 1853 I have sworn to devote my life on the battle field. Now, advanced in years and weighed down with illness, I am in an extremely critical position. Yet, that I may preserve my first ideals, I am by no means willing to shrink from death. Lest perchance I should meet the extreme calamity [of death] and you be left with no knowledge of my various affairs, I am now setting forth one or two matters, in order that, being prepared, you may not be too perplexed.<sup>8</sup>

By the time Tsêng arrived in T'ientsin, July 8, he had already decided to attempt the settlement of the less serious claims of Russia, Great Britain, and America, and then to address himself to the difficult French issues.<sup>9</sup> To his mind the whole question behind the massacre was that of the implication of the church in the two charges of kidnapping and tearing out hearts and eyes, and that question must first be investigated, since the confessions of the kidnappers accused the church. After Wang San was arrested, Tsêng proposed to find out whether he had been reared by the church, whether he was or was not implicated in the crime of kidnapping with Wu Lan-chen, and, finally, whether there was any truth in the charge

<sup>8</sup> *Nienp'u*, XII, 4. Also see letters to his sons, July 2, 1870. I think that the point of view here reflected, coupled with the fact of his illness—he had entirely lost the use of one eye and suffered from a liver complaint that required rest (*Dispatches*, XXIX, 33a)—will defend Tsêng from the sarcasm of Cordier, IV, 130: "A la nouvelle du massacre, Tsêng Kuo-fan avait bien reçu l'ordre (édit du 23 Juin) de se rendre de Pao Ting a T'ien Tsin; il ne donna aucun signe de vie pendant trois jours, puis il se prétendit malade; (il avait, dit-on, mal aux yeux); et finalement n'arriva a T'ien Tsin que dix-sept jours (8 juillet) apres la catastrophe."

Tsêng's *Home Letters*, April 17, speak of great pain in his side and legs which made it hard for him to read and write. His illness was, I am convinced, genuine and not formal.

<sup>9</sup> A memorial of July 5, *Dispatches*, XXIX, 34.

that hearts and eyes were torn out.<sup>10</sup> The Chinese attitude in the negotiations would depend very much on their findings on these points. If they were true, China would have a certain amount of reason on her side and need not be too yielding; but if they were false, China would have to accept the responsibility for a grave offence against France. The French chargé, Rochechouart, had maintained that four questions were at stake: the insult to the flag, the murder of an official, the murder of several people, and the destruction of property. Tsêng, commenting on this to Prince K'ung, writes: "I hear that foreign nations regard an injury to the flag as breaking off peaceful relations and showing intention to resort to arms. We Chinese, announcing our firm belief in a peaceful solution of the case, are only able in fairness to pay indemnity, restore the property of the church, punish the offenders and give recompense for the lives lost. If they raise stormy waves, we should only remain calm and not be too positive in discussing matters with them."<sup>11</sup>

This frankly expressed policy of peace and justice did not meet with the approval of the Chinese population. At T'ientsin Tsêng found an outward calm which concealed a seething discontent. Through the organisation known as the "Water and Fire Society" popular dissatisfaction made itself felt against Ts'ung Hou for having taken precautions against further trouble by forbidding any gatherings or the spreading of rumours; then against Tsêng on his arrival for confirming instead of reversing Ts'ung Hou's measures. The counsels of the opposition were hopelessly divided as to the means of coping with the foreigners. Some desired a general up-

<sup>10</sup> Letters to Ts'ung Hou about July 4, but the date is not certain. *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, XXXII, 41b. Also see letter to Prince K'ung about the same time, *ibid.*, pp. 43 f.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

rising to expel foreigners from China, others an alliance with England and America against France. A third group would have war with France alone, while a more timid company would be contented to see Ts'ung Hou dismissed. When Tsêng, following his peace policy, ordered the protection of all foreigners, he turned the hostility of all these factions on himself.

The investigations which followed left the question as to whether kidnapping had taken place in some doubt, but demonstrated the entire innocence of the foreigners on all the charges. After several hundred persons had been examined—a hundred and fifty in the institution itself—not a single case could be found of persons actually kidnapped or any proof of hearts and eyes torn out. All the charges were based on well-side gossip and were no more authenticated than similar charges in Hunan, at Yangchow, or in other parts of Chihli. In his report Tsêng says:

Since England and France are illustrious countries how could they permit such atrocious actions? Looking at it from the standpoint of reason it could not be true. The Catholic Church has as a fundamental aim the urging of men to be upright. In the days of the Imperial Ancestor, the Benevolent Emperor [K'anghsi], they were long permitted to carry on their work. Had they aimed to kill and cut up human beings how could they have been tolerated in K'anghsi's generation? As to the establishment of the Hall of Compassion, their original purpose is to collect together in orphanages and almshouses the bereaved and poor people. The money they spend each year is considerable.

But there is also a reason why the people of Tientsin harbor doubts and grow excited. The first cause of doubt arises from the fact that the gates of the foreign churches stand closed the entire year; they are very secret and the inside [of their grounds] cannot be seen. The church and the Hall of Benevolence alike have underground rooms, and they are constructed by workmen engaged in other places. Your servant and others went in person

to the foundations of the burnt church and carefully examined and found that these underground rooms are only to prevent dampness and furnish storerooms for coal and have no other use. But the people of T'ientsin, not having seen for themselves, but merely having heard that there were these underground rooms, were much excited at the reports that young children were shut up in their dark recesses, especially since [the work] did not pass through the hands of local workmen.

A second cause for doubt arises from the fact that there are Chinese who have come to the Hall of Benevolence to be cured of diseases, who have remained for a long while and cannot be induced to come out again. Such a case occurred when the daughter of a former magistrate of the Tsinhsien district, Kiangsi, Wei Hei-chen, Mrs. Ho [*née* Wei], brought her daughter into the Hall for treatment. And when she did not return after a long time her father went to the Hall and gently besought her to come home, but she was stubbornly unwilling to do so. It was therefore declared that they had a medicine which magically destroyed her original nature.

The third cause of doubt is due to the fact that the Hall of Benevolence, when it receives and keeps children who have no support, though they are beggars and poverty-stricken folk, receives all those who are dangerously ill and about to die into their faith. There is also the report about baptism. Baptism means that when they die the priest takes water and places it on their foreheads and seals their eyes, saying that they can ascend to heaven. When the people see that they receive [into the faith] those who are at the point of death, and hear that they themselves wash the eyes of the dead, they are greatly surprised. Again there are wagons and boats that bring people from other places to T'ientsin, fetching sometimes several tens or a hundred persons. The populace seeing these [persons] come in but never go out, cannot understand the reason.

A fourth cause of suspicion is that within the institution the buildings are many and scattered, with different places where scripture is studied, lessons read, hand work done, or the sick healed. Sometimes a child is in a front building and the mother in one at the back, or the mother in the Hall of Benevolence and



the son in the church building by the river, and they do not meet for years.

In addition to these a fifth cause for suspicion lies in the *fact* that during the fourth and fifth moons of this year there were cases of kidnappers who used medicines to bewitch people, while at the same time the number of deaths at the mission were unusually numerous, and many of the burials took place at night, with two or three corpses in one coffin. On the 6th of the Fifth Moon [June 4], in a burial ground east of the river a coffin containing two bodies was dug up by a dog. Tso Pao-kwei, *yuchi* of the middle camp of T'ientsin city, and others inspected them. The dead all begin to decompose from within, but these had begun to decompose on the outside, their breasts and abdomens were torn open and their entrails exposed. This gave rise to serious rumours. When people hear everywhere at all times the words of inflammatory placards they believe them to be proven; but when these five doubts are gathered together they hate to the utmost. When the kidnappers implicated the church and the people saw the sight in the graveyard . . . their rage was uncontrollable. Finally, when the prefect and magistrate went to the mission to examine Wang San and consul Fontanier fired his revolver their frenzy was all the more out of control. It caused a clamor to arise from ten thousand throats at the same time; they made a sudden onslaught and consummated a great riot. Such giddy conceit is surely an abominable thing, but these suspicions are not the result of a single morning and evening.<sup>12</sup>

So far as the preliminary investigations went, therefore, the Roman Catholic Church was completely vindicated. But while these results were being obtained the temper of the foreign ministers underwent a change. Seeing nothing tangible to show for the promises of settlement and demands of punishment, their former tone of mildness now tended towards belligerency. On his coming to T'ientsin Tsêng had sent a carefully worded letter to the French chargé of which he writes to Prince K'ung:

<sup>12</sup> Translated from a part of Tsêng's general report, *Dispatches*, XXIX, 36-40a.

Foreigners are most impatient by nature, and the T'ientsin affair has dragged on for ten days with nothing but empty dispatches going back and forth. So, fearing lest they might get out of patience at the delay, in order to quiet their minds—especially on the points to be debated—I have already sent them a dispatch promising speedily to settle the matter. Though the dispatch was very sincere I “used an empty pen” on the subjects of penalty and indemnity, on which matters negotiations are desirable.<sup>13</sup>

In a letter, about July 14, Tsêng anticipated very little trouble, writing as follows:

Yesterday I heard that a message had arrived by telegraph stating that a reply had come from the French monarch to the general effect that for many years relations with China had been conducted amicably. If on this matter the points at issue were to be settled justly, peace could be preserved and there would be no need to adopt military measures, etc. I do not know whether the report is true or not. The French and Prussians are at the brink of war; reports to that effect have been rife for some time. If by chance France should go to war with Prussia, or even if their relations grow more strained, she would not care to get into difficulties with China. I hear further that the French monarch is old and burdened with affairs so that his intentions will be peaceful, not warlike.<sup>14</sup>

Even if no complication had arisen over the punishment of local officials there would have been more difficulty in securing justice on the Chinese side than the foreigners realised, engrossed as they were with the outrageous murders of their innocent nationals. In a number of letters Tsêng makes mention of this.<sup>15</sup> Some of the guilty ones had disappeared, others would not confess

<sup>13</sup> Undated letter to Prince K'ung, written probably on the eighth or ninth of July. *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, XXXII, 45.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, XXXII, 46b.

<sup>15</sup> In particular in a letter to Li Hung-chang, *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, XXXII, 52b-54a.

even under torture. Even as late as September he still had but a small list of proved participants in the riot. The difficulty of securing evidence and convictions against guilty parties in mobs, as, for example, in the United States, enables us to understand, and to some extent sympathise with Tsêng in his troubles. On the other hand, the French were not content to sit down and await the slow and uncertain outcome of such investigations. There were at least three men who could be held accountable for negligence if not culpability, the prefect and magistrate of T'ientsin, who were charged with keeping the peace in the city, and the *t'ituh* or general of the province, Ch'eng Kuo-jui. The French held that these men, knowing of the rumors that were abroad and of the placards that bore horrible accusations against the missionaries, should have taken due precautions to maintain order.

On July 19 the French chargé demanded (and this was confirmed by a dispatch the following day) that capital punishment be inflicted on these three men, with a threat of naval action unless the demand was complied with. Tsêng and Ts'ung Hou consulted together and decided that, in spite of their opinion that these men were in no way deserving of such a punishment, the French appeared to be so thoroughly in earnest that the welfare of the whole country rendered it necessary for China to yield to their demand. Accordingly they recommended handing over the prefect and magistrate to the Board of Punishments; but in view of the *t'ituh's* slight connection with the case they recommended that negotiations regarding him be transferred to Peking, where that officer was at the moment.<sup>16</sup> This memorial marks the turning point in the negotiations. Tsêng felt that he had made a serious mistake in adopting the recommenda-

<sup>16</sup> *Dispatches*, XXIX, 42.

tion that these men be punished. The *Nienp'u* asserts that Tsêng had yielded against his better judgment to the arguments of T'sung Hou, and that almost before the dispatch had left his hands he regretted his part in it. In several of his letters he tried to recall the recommendations, and in the last communication with Prince K'ung he observes that in dealing with foreigners one must leave room for retreat on account of their craftiness; that in the matter of the punishment of these officials he had made a cardinal mistake by agreeing to it and leaving himself no ground for such retreat.<sup>17</sup> Violent opposition arose on the part of officials and gentry to sacrificing these two men. Letters of protest, memorials to the emperor, denunciations, poured in from all sides because of Tsêng's whitewashing of the Roman Catholic Mission and his recommendation of punishment for the local officials. On the other hand, Ts'ung Hou pulled in the other direction, urging that they go further in meeting the demands of the French as to the local officials. Since Tsêng, sorry that he had gone that far, firmly refused to proceed a step further, Ts'ung Hou asked to have him replaced by some other official.<sup>18</sup>

On all sides the Chinese began to talk of war. But with characteristic courage Tsêng tried to stem the current setting in that direction. At the end of July he plainly discussed China's condition for war in a frank memorial to the emperor. He said that it was necessary for China to suppress vigorously all talk of war, because she was too weak to fight. Personally the thought of death on the battle field did not daunt him, but the fact was that China could not wage a successful war and had no alternative to a peace policy. Even if by strenuous efforts temporary success could be won, the foreigners would simply come

<sup>17</sup> *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, XXXII, 56.

<sup>18</sup> *Nienp'u*, XII, 8a-9b.

again a following year, stronger than ever. The T'ientsin affair was stirred up by the ignorant rabble and should not be permitted to lead to war.<sup>19</sup> This pointed to a somewhat opportunist policy—granting all the reasonable demands of France while trying to get off as lightly as possible regarding the punishment of officials. In a letter to Li Hung-chang in September<sup>20</sup> he told him that Robert Hart had advised him to apprehend the guilty parties, and, if they received their just punishment, the demands regarding the officials could easily be settled. Eventually the Chinese government was driven to Tsêng's point of view, but it first tried the plan of sending other men to aid in the negotiations. Ting Jih-chang, governor of Kiangsu, was ordered north, and Mao Chang-hsi came temporarily, bringing a number of high officials from Peking. Li Hung-chang also was ordered to bring his army to T'ientsin, and arrived there in August.<sup>21</sup> He suggested that a joint commission be appointed to investigate the charges against the two local officials, the decision of which should be binding on each side,<sup>22</sup> but at that time the emperor was indignantly refusing to consider the execution of these men, and the suggestion came to nought.<sup>23</sup> Another group of these new negotiators tried to secure a modification of the French demands, but the chargé was adamant, and in consequence the prefect and magistrate were ordered to T'ientsin for trial. On the twenty-seventh of September the report of the trial was made by Tsêng, saying that the evidence against them was slight and that they were commended to the leniency of the Board of Punishment, in order to allay the fears of officials and people throughout China.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, XXXII, 54, 55a.

<sup>21</sup> *Nienp'u*, XII, 8-9b.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 10b.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 11. Edicts of August 8 and 12, which insisted that the French had the right only to demand justice, not to impose such an indignity.

The French on their side were exasperated at the slow progress of the trials of rioters, and they protested against the consideration shown the accused officials, who were, they said, treated as distinguished guests rather than as prisoners. Threats of bombardment were made by the French naval officer unless within a definite period the whole case were satisfactorily settled. In a letter to Prince K'ung, Tsêng says he does not know whether the threat is to be taken seriously or what kind of a settlement would suffice. "If they want the prefect and magistrate executed," he writes, "China can settle the case on that basis only with the greatest difficulty. If they say that they desire the punishment of the guilty parties China cannot justly refuse. Can they indicate the definite number of persons whose execution would satisfy them? When China has meted out punishment according to the number, can peace easily be preserved or not? In addition to this, and compensation for the churches, and indemnity for the lives, is there any other demand or not?" He added that he had already completed the trials of eight who deserved execution, and had a list of some twenty who should be punished. To produce a definite number of genuine rioters at a specified time was a simple impossibility. When the limit of time expired he intended to offer his list, and promise another list a few days later, thus avoiding war.<sup>24</sup> In accordance with this plan he did submit a first list of offenders (September 8),<sup>25</sup> with a total of fifteen to be executed and twenty-one to receive lighter punishment. A final list was submitted on October 7.<sup>26</sup> This sufficed for the French, and the rest of the negotiations proved to be easy. A compromise was reached on the punishment of the officials, the *t'ituh* being

<sup>24</sup> *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, XXXII, 51, 52. Early in September in all probability.

<sup>25</sup> *Dispatches*, XXIX, 64-66a.

<sup>26</sup> *Nienp'u*, XII, 15b, 16.

released, and the prefect and magistrate condemned to banishment in Heilungkiang.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile, through the assassination of Ma Sin-yi in Nanking, that governorship again became vacant, and Tsêng, being practically *persona non grata* to the higher officials in the capital and yet too powerful to degrade or dismiss, was appointed to fill it, by edict dated August 30, 1870. When the general terms of the settlement were agreed to, he was ordered to hasten to his new office. On the way to Nanking Tsêng stopped at Peking, where he was received in audience, October 20 and 21. Again the questions were asked by the empress dowager, Ts'u Hsi:<sup>28</sup>

Question. On what day did you leave T'ientsin?

Answer. On the twenty-third [October 17].

Q. Have the chief offenders in T'ientsin been executed yet or not?

A. They have not yet been punished. But according to the consul's word the Russian minister will come to T'ientsin, and the French minister [chargé] Rochechouart is sending men as witnesses, so it has not been possible to execute them.

Q. When does Li Hung-chang think he will be able to punish Win and his fellow culprits?

A. On the night of the 23d [October 17] a letter was received from Li Hung-chang stating that he expects that all the culprits will be punished by the 25th [October 19].

Q. Is the populace of T'ientsin just now restless and hard to manage?

A. The populace is already quieted now and not hard to manage.

Q. Whatever possessed the prefect and magistrate to make their early escape to Hsünteh and other places? [In other words why were they allowed to go?]

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 15. Decision on the t'ituh's case was reached on September 25; that on the others October 5.

<sup>28</sup> *Record of Important Events*, IV, 6.

A. When the prefect and magistrate left their posts there was no anticipation of their being criminals, so they boldly set out; then afterwards when men were sent to inform them that they had been degraded and reported to the Board of Punishments these officials were much surprised and started back from Hsünteh and Mihyun to T'ientsin.

Q. Do you now have any sight in your right eye?

A. My right eye is without light and I can see nothing, but my left eye still has sight.

Q. Are your other ailments cured?

A. The other things are much better.

Q. From the way you stand and kneel your strength seems to be good.

A. I have not regained all my former strength.

Q. The affair of Ma Sin-yi, is it not strange?

A. This affair is very strange.

Q. Ma Sin-yi managed affairs very well.

A. He managed affairs with skill and mildness.

The next day the interview was continued :

Q. How many soldiers did you drill in Chihli?

A. Your servant drilled three thousand new soldiers; the former viceroy, Kwan Wen, drilled four thousand old-style soldiers, seven thousand in all. It is the intention to train three thousand more, making a total of ten thousand. I have already come to an understanding with Li Hung-chang to determine the regulations according to your servant's memorial and carry out the plan.

Q. The training of soldiers in the south is also most important. You must manage this very efficiently.

A. It is now quiet along the seacoast, but we must find means of guarding it. Your servant intends to establish fortifications at important places along the Yangtse River.

Q. If you can defend this it will be very fine. These churches give us constant trouble.

A. Of late years there have been many riots connected with churches. The church members are fond of imposing on those common people who do not "eat the religion"; the



priests are willing to protect the church members, and the consuls to protect the priests. Next year when the treaty with France is revised we must make a revision in the clause regarding the church. . . .

His visit in Peking was extended till after the emperor's birthday (November 3) and his own (November 4). That being his sixtieth anniversary, his fellow officials of Hunan and Hupeh gave him a magnificent feast in the Guild Hall. After that he repaired to Nanking, where he took over the seals on December 14.<sup>29</sup>

He was far from popular now in the capital, and wrote to his brother from Nanking during the following year:<sup>30</sup>

The two times I was in Peking I was not properly received, for I was neglected by all the officials. Especially has this been true since the T'ientsin affair, over which wordy discussions have taken place, and since when in all matters great or small those in the Board have been disposed to keep it stirred up with trifling words and cutting gibes. When Ch'eng Yu-li, being forwarded to Heilungkiang, passed through T'ungchow, his wife at the capital made accusations in which she said that I had been unfair in carrying on my investigation and that I owed him four thousand taels on his salary and would not pay it, etc. From this my heart cannot but be saddened. Who, having lived through several decades, does not know that official life, if it has its comforts, also has its risks; that if there is promotion there is also downfall, and that he should in anticipation cultivate a detachment that cannot be overcome, only praying that no serious calamity shall befall him sufficient to bring shame to his ancestors, his relatives, and the people of his native place?

Aside from routine matters and a long tour of inspection in October and November, 1871, only one thing is of especial importance in this second term of Tsêng at Nanking. This was the memorial in which he and Li Hung-

<sup>29</sup> *Nienp'u*, XII, 17b.

<sup>30</sup> *Home Letters*, September 24, 1871.

chang begged the emperor to deputise Ch'eng Lan-pin and Yung Wing to pick out and send to America and other countries of the West superior young men to learn the mechanical arts. They called attention to the earlier attempts to send Chinese abroad to learn how to organise the army and navy, but thought that the time had now come, particularly in view of the newly negotiated treaty with America, to send students, first to America and then to other countries, to learn all the arts. The two viceroys had already instructed the two designated officials to draw up regulations for these students and begged the Tsungli Yamen to endorse them. Funds were to be secured from the customs revenues. It is beyond the limits of this book to trace the subsequent history of this attempt, which if carried out in accordance with the wishes of Tsêng Kuo-fan and Li Hung-chang—provided sufficient numbers of chosen men had been sent abroad—would have resulted in bringing China far on the road of progress.

This plan was sound in its aim. When we reflect on the benefit secured to Japan from the Iwakura Embassy and the students sent abroad about the same time, it does not appear at all unreasonable to suppose that, had there been a succession of men of such liberal spirit and fearless temper as Tsêng, the plan would not have failed as it did. Its conception and outspoken recommendation by a man, who in his youth had reflected a strong desire that foreigners might leave China forever, shows how little truth there is in the charge that Tsêng was hopelessly reactionary. He was distinctly in advance of the average official and citizen of his day and for a generation thereafter. He had evidently grasped the thought that China was far behind the Western states both in government and the mechanical arts, and that she would be at a serious disadvantage unless steps were taken to remedy her shortcomings.

It was probably about this same time or a little earlier that Tsêng sent a secret memorial urging the modernisation of the government by the adoption of the following programme:<sup>51</sup>

1. The removal of the capital from Peking to some central point.
2. Abolishment of the corrupt practices of officialdom and the establishment of right methods of government.
3. Reform of the military in the creation of a modern army and navy, both to be placed under the central government.
4. Reorganisation of the treasury, which should be controlled entirely by the central government.
5. Reform in the method of recruiting the civil service, the dismissal of useless officials and the specific training of those who were capable.

The matters discussed in this memorial, of which the above is a simple outline, are the fundamental weaknesses of the Chinese system as it then existed, and, despite the Revolution, still exists today. It is very doubtful whether even the prestige of a man of Tsêng's caliber would have sufficed to transform the China of that day, with its great conservatism, into a progressive state. The task was certainly beyond the strength of Li Hung-chang, who, however, was more of a politician than Tsêng and apparently acted less on principle than expediency. Yet it is greatly to the credit of Tsêng that he so accurately pointed out the evils and indicated the remedies which, if his successors could only have adopted them, would have prevented the sad collapse of her central government.

That he is to be classed as a progressive and not a reactionary is to be seen in the further fact that Tsêng and the higher officials of state for a generation had broken through the red tape of Chinese practice and attained

<sup>51</sup> Kawasaki, *To-ho no I-jin*, pp. 105-6. I have been unable to secure the original memorial, but it apparently dates from 1870 or 1871.

high office at a comparatively youthful age, in many instances without having gone through the intermediate steps.<sup>32</sup> Tsêng himself never held any provincial office in the regular way until he was appointed viceroy of the Two Kiang. His brother, Kuo-ch'üan, although he held titular rank in the lower levels, actually commenced his civil career as governor. Li Hung-chang, Tso Tsung-tang, and P'eng Yu-ling similarly moved into the higher ranks with little or no actual service in the minor civil offices. These were extraordinary steps for so conservative a government as that of China to take. By thus radically breaking red tape for Tsêng and his appointees, China was borne far from its old moorings, and in political as well as other matters Tsêng proved himself liberal if not radical, where changes did not involve departures from the inner genius of his race.

His death occurred suddenly in March, 1872, during his period of rest following the daily after-dinner walk in his garden. It was not wholly unexpected, however, for there had been a number of preliminary warnings, one of them a few days before his death, when he went out to the riverside to meet a distinguished visitor and fainted in his sedan chair on the way. It was a great loss, deeply felt by the people of Nanking and by those who recognised the importance of his work throughout China. For three days the imperial audiences were suspended in his honor. The mandate issued on this occasion may well summarise the Chinese feeling towards him, because it expresses what in his case were no mere polite platitudes:

Tsêng Kuo-fan, Grand Secretary and Viceroy of the Two Kiang, was thoroughly learned, wide and deep in ability, loyal and sincere by natural disposition and upright in conduct. Hav-

<sup>32</sup> Li Ung-bing calls attention to this fact in his *Outlines of Chinese History*, pp. 543 f.

ing gained special notice of the Emperor Hsuan Tsung [Toa-kwang] he rose continuously from the Hanlin Academy to the second rank. In the second year of Hsienfung he organised the Hunan Army and attacked the Yueh Rebels, fighting successively in a number of provinces and repeatedly gaining honours for meritorious service. The Emperor Wen Tsung [Hsienfung] rewarded him by designating him to active office and appointed him viceroy of the Two Kiang, ordering that he be appointed an Imperial Commissioner in charge of military affairs. Later on, when We were looking over these records We realised that here was a most important man. His merit was very great in the pacification of the southeast. On the fall of Nanking he was honoured with a first class "Enduring and Brave" marquisate, hereditary and not to be abrogated, and granted the right to wear a two-eyed peacock feather. Having held office at this post for a long time he knew all its good and bad points. He gave all his strength to making plans [for its welfare]. He was a reliable minister and greatly esteemed by the populace—in truth a minister who was Our other self, who would be expected to live long and enjoy continued favour. Now We hear of his passing away and Our grief is profound.

Let Tsêng Kuo-fan be granted the posthumous title of Senior Tutor. Let a reward of three thousand *taels* be granted, according to the rank of a cabinet minister, for funeral expenses, to be paid from the Nanking treasury. Let a sacrifice be offered in his honour; Mutenga is to go thither to perform this sacrifice. We also confer on him the posthumous name of Wen Cheng. His spirit tablet is to be in the Memorial Hall of the Illustrious Faithful and in the Hall of the Worthy in the capital. Also in his native Hunan and in Nanking let special memorial temples be erected in his honour. A full account of his life and activities is to be forwarded to the Board of Historiographers. As is fitting, his mistakes are hereby cancelled. Let the *yamen* investigate and send in a memorial. When his coffin is being borne to his native place let all the local officials [along the way] give it special care. His title of marquis of the first grade is to be inherited by his son Tsêng Chi-tse, who is excused from being presented for an interview. As to the number of his descendants, Ho Ching is

to make an investigation and report in a memorial, after which Imperial Mandates will be issued, granting them special favour in order to commemorate his extreme faithfulness and sincerity. Respect this.

Tsêng's mantle fell on Li Hung-chang, whose subsequent career meets foreign relations at so many points as almost to obliterate among Westerners the memory of his older chief, in spite of the fact that in Chinese eyes there is no comparison. Li Hung-chang and Tso Tsung-tang accomplished much after Tsêng's death; but not a leaf of Tsêng's wreath have they taken away in the eyes of the Chinese. Tsêng was honest and died poor; Li was reputed to have profited from high office and died very wealthy. In addition to this, Li never found the type of associates whom Tsêng had gathered about him. Some said this was because Li was too radical, others because he preferred to have inferior men that he might shine by contrast. Whatever the cause, the civil service, which to the end of the eighties was largely dominated by Tsêng's veteran leaders of the Taiping days, rapidly declined in the generation following until the Revolution of 1911 swept the Manchu Dynasty from power altogether.

## CHAPTER XVI

### TSÊNG'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

THE story of the Taiping uprising and of the attempt to organise the imperial forces to suppress it has carried us from the modern world of the West into a mediaeval environment. It is hard to realise that the Crimean War synchronised with the earlier stages of the great rebellion and the American Civil War and the rebirth of Japan with the last years, yet it was so. But if we step from the thought-world of Europe and America of that period to the inner life of the Chinese of Tsêng's day, we are transported into the dim days of antiquity when the Nile River, Crete, and the Mesopotamian Valley were the centers of civilisation. To realise how extended a mental journey he made from his boyhood till he and Li Hung-chang memorialised the emperor to send capable young men abroad, we must imagine a person born in the age of Confucius or Plato and living to the mid-Victorian period. It would be an interesting study to compile a biography of Tsêng's inner life and development from the abundant materials preserved in his essays, letters, reports, and diaries. A single chapter is all too brief to include the interesting material that is available, but it will at least show what were the animating principles that guided his personal and family life, and that determined his attitude towards some of the institutions of his native land.

The genealogical tables of the Tsêng family go back to the beginning of Chinese history, and are fairly certain from the days of Confucius. Tsêng Kuo-fan is in the seventieth generation from the famous philosopher Tsêng-tzu, who was one of the foremost disciples of the great sage. The branch from which the Hunan members sprung settled in Hengyang under the Mongol Dynasty, and in Siangsiang during the seventeenth century, where they pursued the occupation of farming.<sup>1</sup> None of the members stand out remarkably until we reach the grandfather Tsêng Yü-p'ing, generally referred to in Kuo-fan's writings by his other name, Sing-kong. He exerted a notable influence over the grandson, an influence that grew stronger as the youth grew older. This grandfather in his young days tended to be gay and idle. But upon learning that outsiders were predicting the ruin of the family through him, he settled down and became an exemplary and enthusiastic farmer and gardener. With profound respect for the progenitors of the family he took the lead in building a suitable ancestral temple, feeling that among the spirits none were more to be revered than the forbears whose interest and influence in the family, both for good or evil, far outweighed that of the more distant gods and demons.<sup>2</sup>

In contact with such a powerful personality, Tsêng grew up with a strong sense of family unity. At the very center of all his thinking was the family, and he devoted much energy to secure a well-ordered family life among his brothers and his sons. Some of his most famous letters are those which have to do with domestic matters. One of these, written when Tsêng had attained high rank in Peking and had learned of the serious illness of his grandfather, laments the fact that he himself lives in luxury

<sup>1</sup> *Record of Chief Events*, I, 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Record of Chief Events*, I, 1b.



in the capital while his parents labor hard at home; but he rejoices in the filial conduct of his brothers.\* He says:

The most fortunate thing about our family is that all of you younger brothers display the utmost filial conduct in the treatment of your father and uncles, and are able to exert all your strength in serving your elders. Eating rich food and wearing gold embroideries, I am utterly unable to carry out the least portion of a grandson's duties; while my wife, sitting without a care and enjoying the service of others, cannot share my mother's toil—the thought of it brings forth perspiration in streams.

I have carefully observed that in all the official families of China the individuals can be used to advantage only for one generation. Their sons and grandsons become proud and luxurious, then fall into profligate ways and at last come to the gutter. Those that can, happily, endure for one or two generations are rare. Merchant families who are industrious and economical may continue for three or four generations. Agricultural and scholar families which are industrious and unpretentious are able to keep up for six or seven generations. Where filial and fraternal conduct is followed, the families may be prolonged to ten or eight generations. I live in very great fear lest, through dependence on our ancestors' accomplishments and my own rapid promotion, they will be in danger of failing to be employed even to the end of their own lives, and therefore I instruct my brothers and sons in the fervent hope that they make ours like the farmer and scholar families, or like the families of the filial and fraternal, but I would not have it like those of the official class. In their reading my brothers must cover much ground and in their work be diligent, not constantly thinking of the official position they are to attain. Unless they understand this they will not measure up to the virtue of their grandfather, though they reach high position and distinguished office. . . . My brother Teng [Kuo-hwang] whenever I am promoted or granted an office, speaks of me as being a virtuous son and grandson, not realising that this is not virtue at all.

In accordance with the thought that a family life

\* *Home Letters*, May 8, 1849.

founded in filial respect and brotherly harmony is of prime importance, and that such family unity and purity is in danger when its simplicity is lost through official promotion, Tsêng makes constant appeals to his brothers never to abandon the agricultural interests on which the family must depend. This, he says,

is the old family occupation and must remain our chief source of support, and simplicity must be preserved. If I am lucky enough to get out of officialdom I wish to go back to the home life and give myself to it in a whole-souled manner. Every one, poor and lowly or rich and honourable, is to be treated in the same manner. In days of prosperity we must prepare for evil days.<sup>4</sup>

In other letters the same note of warning is struck against yielding to the temptation to escape hard work and simplicity of life.

It is most important for Chia-san and Chia-wu to do hard work. Born in the present chaotic days, the principle to be followed by those living at home is not to possess too much wealth. Abundant wealth is, in the end, a matter of care and danger. Moreover, you must not enjoy too much retired leisure, slackness and indolence. If you go between the old and the new dwelling you should always walk, not travel by sedan chair or horseback. You should climb the hills and exercise your muscles. Families of the official and gentry class should not lay up fortunes. This will cause their descendants to understand naturally that they have nothing to rely on, that if they do not work every day they will face the danger of future starvation. In this way the younger generation will gradually learn to work, knowing that each one must be self-supporting.<sup>5</sup>

To Tsêng's mind one of the best correctives to pride

<sup>4</sup> Letter of July 16, 1866, when Tsêng was viceroy and imperial commissioner.

<sup>5</sup> *Home Letters*, October 7, 1855.

was constantly to remember the hard circumstances out of which they had emerged. In 1867 he wrote:<sup>6</sup>

Although we are now prosperous, our family must not forget the customs of simple gentle-folk. The junior members must sternly overcome pride and laziness. To overcome pride the first step is to refrain from loudly upbraiding servants and dependents. For my part, I never forget the circumstances in which I peddled vegetable baskets in Chiang Shi Chieh, and you brothers must not forget that Chou-shan pulled carts laden with stone—that our former days were very bitter.

Nevertheless, there is also a strong sense of family pride, coupled with a desire that its members will always conduct themselves according to the dignity of their standing. This implied both that they keep away from the lower officials, lest their intercourse injure the highly placed brother in Peking, and also lest they seem to abuse their power. When Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan received his degree in the examinations, Tsêng, according to etiquette, should have written the literary chancellor a note of thanks, but he wrote home that he was unwilling to do so because the official in question bore an unsavory reputation, and he added: "Our family, since they belong to the country gentry, must under no circumstances enter *yamens* and speak of public matters, running a risk of being shabbily treated by the officials. Even where our family has a matter of business we should rather be willing to suffer loss, but must in no case enter on lawsuits and lead the officials to suspect that we rely on our power to put others to shame." And in addition to compromising the dignity of the family by such conduct their relation with the officials would cause the higher officeholders in Peking to give Tsêng black marks because of the activity of relatives at home.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, February 8, 1867. Chou-shan was Tsêng Kuo-fan's father.

<sup>7</sup> *Home Letters*, July 3, 1845.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, January 29, 1846.

Family pride of that sort, however, did not in any way imply that they were to be unneighborly to the humbler families through the countryside. Tsêng was always eager for news of local happenings, the births, weddings, and deaths among the acquaintances. He always desired that the members at home should fulfill carefully all the obligations of good neighbors. A letter to his eldest son in 1867 says:<sup>9</sup>

Li Shen-fu's mother always quoted a couplet which ran,  
"When you have money or wine you lavish it on distant relatives,

When fire burns or thieves break in you call your nearest neighbours,"

warning the rich or highly-placed families not to be generous to distant relatives while they treat their neighbours shabbily. Our family, recently changed to a position of prosperity, cannot slight the near neighbours; in wine and food we should be free, in ceremonial we should be respectful. You might even employ a man specially to entertain our guests. Except for interfering in their private affairs and taking part in their lawsuits, wherever it is possible conveniently to act we should not be sparing.

Within the family, Tsêng took very seriously the responsibility that fell to him as elder brother. His letters are filled with advice to his juniors, and he made it clear that they were not to undertake duties that devolved on him. On one occasion he wrote in reproof:<sup>10</sup> "Younger brothers should not manage the affairs of the home. When the heavens are rent it is the weirds that bring it about; when there are great floods king Yü is there to control them; home affairs are for the elders of the family to govern while outside affairs are in my control. My younger brothers are simply to carry on their routine tasks with quiet minds." Somewhat later, possibly in

<sup>9</sup> *Chia Hsun* (Letters to his sons), January 3, 1867.

<sup>10</sup> *Home Letters*, January 25, 1845.

the hope of having better coöperation among the members at home, he placed the direction of household affairs under Kuo-hwang, telling him that the elders had established good family customs which he must perpetuate for later generations.<sup>11</sup> Such literal assumption of the elder brother's right to control was not at all acceptable to the junior members. On a number of occasions Tsêng and his brothers were involved in misunderstandings and even quarrels, due in some measure to his plain speaking. In the case of Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan these strained relations were so frequent that one suspects that they never could understand each other.

While the younger man was a student in his brother's house at Peking in 1841, a quarrel arose which was finally settled only when the father wrote to Kuo-ch'üan calling him back to his duty.<sup>12</sup> The following year Kuo-ch'üan insisted on returning to Hunan, and after reaching home he addressed a letter to his brother complaining of his severity, to which Tsêng replied, pointing out at length the duties of an elder brother and showing why he was severe towards his juniors.<sup>13</sup> In 1844 Kuo-fan complains that while his instructions and advice are followed by people all around him, the brothers alone refuse to profit by them.<sup>14</sup> When Tsêng was in Changsha in 1854, he had a violent disagreement with Kuo-hwang, who had arrived at the camp and added greatly to the difficulties of that humiliating period. Tsêng wrote home that hereafter none of the brothers were to come to the camp but must remain at home and attend to their duties there.<sup>15</sup> It was probably this letter that caused Kuo-ch'üan to feel that his elder brother had blocked his way to advancement. In

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, August 28, 1847.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, October 29 and December 1, 1841.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, September 1, 1842.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, February 15, 1843.

<sup>15</sup> *Home Letters*, May 12, May 16, 1854.

1856, when the cause of the imperialists was most gloomy, Tsêng being confined to a small area in Kiangsi, Kuo-ch'üan was in Changsha assisting in the recruiting of men. There he was "discovered" by Hwang Mien, who had just received appointment as prefect of Kian, then in the hands of rebels against whom he was to move. In conferences with Kuo-ch'üan, Hwang Mien found him uncommonly shrewd. Kuo-ch'üan said to Hwang: "Whereas my brother has had success in warfare, nothing comes to me to do. Because I never went to camp and interviewed him I now sit helpless in a small corner. It is but right that I should go to the front, but I am poor and lack the financial ability to raise forces. If you are only able to command the necessary funds I will personally raise an army and go to the aid of my imperilled country."<sup>16</sup> Through this prefect, therefore, not through Tsêng himself, the captor of Nanking embarked on his military career.

Throughout his life this same truculence towards Kuo-fan seemed to poison the mind of the younger brother. Although from an outside point of view it sometimes appeared as though Tsêng were doing all that a brother could, even to risking the charge of nepotism, he continued to nurse a feeling of resentment. Yet Tsêng gave the command at Anking to him, and permitted him to remain in sole control at Nanking even when it imperilled the whole cause. When the imperial mandate suggested his being sent to Hangchow or Shanghai and he preferred to remain at the post of greater glory, Tsêng yielded to his brother's preference, sending Li Hung-chang to Kiangsu and Tso Tsung-tang to Chekiang.<sup>17</sup> During the period of extreme danger, when Kuo-ch'üan was being terribly punished by the Chungwang, in spite of Tsêng's great desire to call for aid from Li Hung-

<sup>16</sup> *Record of Chief Events*, I, 12a.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 7b, 8a.

chang, he finally yielded to his brother's desires and smoothed things over for him. In 1864, just before the capture of Nanking, when an imperial mandate ordered Li Hung-chang to go to Nanking, it was necessary for Tsêng to argue with his brother to accept the situation with good grace, and it was only Li's comprehension of the situation that really settled the question.<sup>18</sup> Though Tsêng constantly upheld his younger brother, the latter always felt that there was partiality against him, whereas in reality Tsêng was concerned for the country and for the honor of the family. On one occasion, when the younger brother had written suggesting that the brothers ought not to speak harshly to each other, Kuo-fan writes: "This sentence is most splendid—worth ten thousand ounces of silver. At home or abroad in transacting affairs I am never altogether truculent or perverse, but I do speak somewhat severely and am now sorry for these things."<sup>19</sup>

Turning to the practical duties of the home, the grandfather's influence was very strong on Tsêng, and many letters from 1859 to 1861 are largely taken up with the emphasis upon one or the other of these matters. Eight characters summarised the eight fundamental home tasks as the grandfather had taught them, namely, "books, vegetables, fish, pigs, early, sweeping, jewels, ancestors." "By books he meant their reading, and studies which were not to be neglected; vegetables, fish and pigs stood for the carrying on of their agricultural pursuits; 'early' means early rising; 'sweeping,' the cleaning of the house; 'ancestors,' the ancestral sacrifices, respectfully offered to the deceased father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, and the sacrifice to the deceased mother. 'Jewels' is the entertaining and greeting of relatives and neighbors, extending congratulations in their joys and condol-

<sup>18</sup> *Home Letters*, May 21, 1864.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, January 16, 1859.

ing with them when they mourn, inquiring after them in illness and relieving their needs. The honorable Sing-kong always said: 'to treat men as men is a priceless jewel.'<sup>20</sup>

In another place<sup>21</sup> he amplified this reflection, holding it to be important that his brothers and sons should remember "our grandfather's eight characters and should also carefully remember his three disbeliefs, namely, disbelief in geomancy, disbelief in doctors and medicine, disbelief in priests and magic. In my diary [he says] I also have eight fundamental maxims, namely,

In reading books consider the explanation as the fundamental thing.

In writing poems and essays regard the sound and meter as the fundamental thing.

In serving relatives regard their pleasure as the fundamental thing.

In developing one's body regard the correction of anger as the fundamental thing.

In behaviour regard not engaging in unmannerly converse as the fundamental thing.

In living at home regard not to rise late the fundamental thing.

In holding office regard not seeking money as the fundamental thing.<sup>22</sup>

In leading soldiers regard not disturbing the populace as the fundamental thing.

These I ponder on, and surely they are hopeful counsels and my brothers should instruct our sons and nephews to remember them without fail. Whether the world is

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, May 19, 1860. In regard to the manner of referring to his grandfather the Chinese is hard to translate, being a term of great respect and yet entirely different from our Western form.

<sup>21</sup> *Home Letters*, April 4, 1861.

<sup>22</sup> In the letter of April 14 he uses the word "love" instead of "seek," making the fundamental thing in office-holding not to love money.



well-ordered or in chaos, the home poor or rich, if only we can hold to the honorable Sing-kong's eight characters and my eight fundamentals we shall never fail to be a family of the higher class." To these were to be added three secrets of good fortune, filial conduct, industry, and reciprocity, of which the last named was defined by Confucius in his form of the golden rule as meaning, "What you do not desire do not inflict on others."<sup>23</sup>

An interesting repetition of the above ideas on wealth and the practice of the homely virtues occurs in a letter written as late as 1867,<sup>24</sup> on the occasion of his writing to tell his family that he could not send a large sum of money home. "Since I became viceroy of the Two Kiang I have never had to treat you so shabbily as now. Yet in a time when disorder reigns, the more abundant the money the greater is the anxiety. My family and that of my brothers need not gather together much silver or brass money. To have at command sufficient for the year's needs is to be reckoned as very wealthy in the land and fortunate among your fellow men. If the family wishes to rise it must depend entirely on rearing superior sons and younger brothers. If these are not superior in virtue and ability, no matter how much silver and brass money, rice, estates, clothing, or books may be amassed, it is all to no avail. Whether the younger generation in a family is superior in virtue or not is six parts due to birth and four parts to the home training. Our family has, from generation to generation, been blessed with perpetual virtue and clear teaching. Surely the honorable Sing-kong's instructions ought to be carefully received and clearly cherished. I have recently put the honorable Sing-kong's home practices into eight lines of verse,

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, April 13, 1861.

<sup>24</sup> *Home Letters*, January 11, 1867.

Your books and vegetables, fish and swine,  
Ancestral rites, early rising, housecleaning, neighborliness—  
At all times to mention and practice these  
Form eight good matters.

The teachings of geomancers, fortune-tellers, physicians,  
The incantations of [Buddhist] priests and magicians  
And the long entertainment of guests—  
Constitute six vexatious things.

For the honorable Sing-kong was easily angered if geomancers, fortune-tellers, physicians, priests or magicians entered the house, and he was also angered if relatives, friends or guests from a distance stayed long. If his eight good practices and six vexatious things are accepted in our family generation after generation as one of the perpetual lessons, even though our descendants be ever so stupid they will at any rate have a slight restraining law." Those who regard Tsêng merely as an exponent of the views of bygone days are mistaken. They will find that he breaks from traditionalism, at any rate in regard to the place that women have in the family life. To be sure he shares the orthodox view that women must engage in the household duties of spinning, sewing, and cooking. While he was in Peking he wrote home on one occasion to his grandfather lamenting the fact that his own wife was too far away to take her place in serving the elders of the household. In another letter he administered reproof to his married sisters because they did not rise early and wait on their mothers-in-law, but on the contrary lay abed and were served.<sup>25</sup> Writing to his eldest son on the occasion of his marriage, he tells him that when his bride comes into her new home she must be instructed to show diligence in weaving and sewing, to go into the kitchen and prepare food with her own hands,

<sup>25</sup> *Home Letters*, January 20, 1843.

since these are the chief duties of married women,<sup>26</sup> adding in another letter that his son must not think that his wife is to be excused from practising these duties simply because she comes from a well-to-do family.<sup>27</sup>

These conservative sentiments scarcely prepare us for his utter condemnation of the Chinese practice of permitting intermarriage between close relatives of different surnames, while strictly forbidding marriage with those of the same name however distant or doubtful the actual relationship. In opposition to a marriage of the sort between actual relatives he observes that children of sisters are quite as near of kin as those of brothers, and that China, in adhering to the rule that those of the same surname might not marry and disregarding true kinship otherwise, had lost touch with reality.<sup>28</sup>

Among the primary duties laid down in Sing-kong's list, the ancestral sacrifices hold a high place. In this fact we see the key to the religious faith of both the grandfather and the grandson, and one of the chief articles in the creed of orthodox China. This was one of the central tenets in the religion handed down from remotest antiquity, not only in China but in other ancient countries as well. Among the shades where spirits dwell, none were of more interest, none to be revered with greater devotion, or, when necessary, placated with more fear, than those spirits of the departed ancestors who possessed so much power for good or ill. The sacrifice to these spirits was of prime importance in the family life. To Sing-kong they were practically all of religion.<sup>29</sup> In a letter to his eldest son Tsêng discusses this sacrifice in connection with his grandfather's views. "Formerly," he says, "my grandfather, the honorable Sing-kong, was most insistent on the right methods of ordering the home

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, March 14, 1856.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, April 11, 1845.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, November 11, 1856.

<sup>29</sup> *Record of Chief Events*, I, 1.

life. The first principle was early rising, the second sweeping everything clean, the third sincerity to offer the sacrifices, and the fourth treating relatives and neighbors well. Of all the relatives and neighbors who came to the home not one was received without great respect—those in distress he must help; with those who had a dispute the matter must be arranged; if there was an occasion of joy congratulations were to be offered, if there was sickness inquiries must be made, and if there was bereavement condolences must be offered. . . . In the matter of sincerely carrying on the sacrifices it is necessary for your mother to give them her careful attention at the proper seasons. All the very best vessels must be set apart for the sacrifices, and the very best food and drink are also to be set aside for the selfsame requirement. Those families which do not properly perform the sacrifices, though they may chance to rise, cannot do so for very long. This is most important, most important.”<sup>80</sup>

If the sacrifices were of such great importance in Tsêng's eyes, the proper location of graves was scarcely less so. We have seen in the quotations from Sing-kong that he professed to have no faith in geomancy, a disbelief shared by Tsêng and commended to his brothers. Yet his letters show much concern about the proper burial of his own ancestors. Thus on the death and burial of his grandmother he wrote to his grandfather congratulating him on the good news of a burial well accomplished, but venturing to question whether the location had been properly chosen to allow for a memorial arch and religious inscription, also whether it were not too close to the river. He proposed that the grave should be moved, not to the end of securing riches, honor, and good fortune, but to avoid ants, dampness, and dangers and secure a

<sup>80</sup> *Household Instruction* (Letters to his sons). Letters of fourth of intercalary third moon, 1860.

spacious approach.<sup>31</sup> Thus he gave his approval of the theory that good or poor locations for the family graves might have great influence on the family fortunes, though he professed not to act by any mercenary motives in such matters.

There was, however, a higher law than that of geomancy, which was merely the science of the earth. In their hearts was written the law of Heaven which bade them render filial loyalty to the desires of the parents and grandparents. When Tsêng learned that his grandfather was opposed to the removal of the grave to a better site he told his brothers to make no further attempt to secure a better location lest they vex their grandfather and cause his illness to grow worse; which would be a serious revolt against the law of Heaven, and could not for that reason bring good fortune, however lucky should be the new location.<sup>32</sup> Obedience to Heaven's law proved to be a wise decision in this case, for he was able in July to write, "since the burial of my grandmother all the household matters have prospered. My grandfather's illness is already cured, my ailment is healed, and I have gone up to the second rank; whence can be seen the good in our *fêngshui*. Under no circumstances must the burial place be changed. If we again change without carefully inquiring into the matter we shall be guilty of a great lack of filial piety."<sup>33</sup> But even yet the good fortune accruing from the location of this grave was not exhausted. In 1849 he was able to record the birth of three sons in the family group, his own elevation to the cabinet, and Kuo-ch'üan's success in the examinations, all of which led him, despite his general attitude, to the assurance that happiness may derive from fortunate burial places.

<sup>31</sup> *Home Letters*, March 3, 1847.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, March 28, 1847.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, July 29, 1847.

Many years later, when his brother had been killed in the battle of San Ho, he wrote to urge care in the selection of a proper grave, citing the good fortune that had befallen a certain family named Loh when they had discovered a good burial ground.<sup>34</sup> Similarly on the birth of a grandson to his uncle he wrote: "Our ancestors must rejoice in the world below. During the last few years my uncle erected a structure at the Chi Kung ancestral temple and offered sacrifices most carefully and reverently. Then this year again he built two rooms—and it has resulted in this great joy. This sufficiently reveals the fact that our remotest ancestors watch over their descendants, that their influences can penetrate in every respect as though they were present."<sup>35</sup> Thus Tsêng fully identified himself with the ideas of his people regarding the right location of graves, the proper attention to ancestral temples, and the offering of the ancestral sacrifices in their due season.

In the years 1844 and 1845 several members of the family had been ill. Whereupon Tsêng wrote to his brothers asking them to set the family graves in order because the series of illnesses seemed to arise from lack of attention to them. At the same time he warned them not to disturb the earth for fear of stirring up the spirits.<sup>36</sup> Towards the close of 1858, after a series of events in which good and evil had apparently befallen the family in regular alternation from 1851, a series culminating in the tragedy of San Ho, Tsêng and his brothers considered it necessary to relocate the graves of their father and mother in order to secure better fortune for the family.<sup>37</sup> One might accumulate many more proofs of Tsêng's faith in this ancient belief of China

<sup>34</sup> *Home Letters*, March 17, 1859.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, January 8, 1856.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, December 18, 1845.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, sixteenth of twelfth moon, 1858, and first of first moon, 1859.

in the power of the ancestors and in the vital need of a happy choice for the ancestral graves, but the foregoing extracts will show what a powerful effect these moves had on the conduct even of a man so cautious about many superstitious practices in connection with Chinese life. To live without making provision for the happiness of the departed was beyond the power of man.

There were other types of superstitious belief in which Tsêng also shared, though in theory his attitude towards them was one of scepticism. In the year 1838 he was travelling on a small stream known as Fanchen Ho, when a sudden storm placed him in considerable peril. In his danger he vowed a play to the goddess of mercy, Kwang-yin, if he should be rescued. As late as 1851 the terror of that wild day so affected him that he wrote home telling his family that none of them must henceforth travel on that river, and should warn their descendants to keep away from it.<sup>38</sup> Omens and signs revealing the will of Heaven are also mentioned in letters as true. Early in 1864 he speaks of peculiarly dark, ashy-looking clouds hanging over the city of Nanking, and wonders if it does not indicate that Heaven is about to bring the Taiping rebellion to an end.<sup>39</sup> In 1858, when he was in control of military operations in Chekiang as well as elsewhere and a mandate came appointing his brother to a post in Chekiang, he wrote home saying that when their late father had been on a pilgrimage to Nanyueh he had made a prophecy saying: "Two pearls are together in your hand, their brilliance shall illumine Hangchow," and he had told Kuo-fan that among his sons two would be officials in Chekiang. Their going would fulfill what was revealed half a century before.<sup>40</sup>

On another occasion, lamenting the death of his brother

<sup>38</sup> *Home Letters*, August 4, 1851.      <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, January 9, 1864.

<sup>40</sup> But the brothers did not actually go there at that time.

at San Ho, he wrote: "In the fourth moon of this year Liu Chang-ch'u was consulting a planchette at my house. To the first question the planchette replied, 'Take [the character] *fu* and replace the military with the civil, and get a certain character.' The character was *pai* [disaster]. I was astonished at the character 'disaster,' not knowing what it referred to. The planchette replied, 'It is spoken of Kiukiang which cannot be rejoiced over.' Again I was astonished because Kiukiang had just been captured; we were all elated over it and I did not know for what reason the opposite should be spoken. The planchette again made answer, 'It is spoken for the whole country as well as for the Tsêng family.' Only now can I see that the disaster at San Ho and the death of our sixth brother are the things which could not be rejoiced over. These four characters being so exactly verified, who could fail to reckon that this had all been determined beforehand? For calamity and happiness are ordered by Heaven, good and evil by men. What is ordered by Heaven we can do nothing but obey; what is determined by men—achieve one portion and reckon it a portion gained, grasp a day and reckon it a day gained."

It will not have escaped the reader that for organised religion, aside from the family sacrifices and the occasional invocation of the local gods Tsêng had no enthusiasm whatever. He came into contact with Christianity through the questionable doctrines of Taipingdom, and later as an official settling claims for damages caused by riots. One passage<sup>41</sup> affords a glimpse of the philosophy of religion he followed and his attitude towards Buddhism and Christianity.

In the beginning the Catholic faith was only a means of gaining riches and profit to support men. Today the most of the for-

<sup>41</sup> Kawasaki, *To-ho no I-jin* (An Eminent Man of the East), p. 126.



eign priests are very poor. Though they say that the church is rich and does not give to them, their words are not to be believed. Since the Chin and Han dynasties the teachings of Duke Chou and Confucius have somewhat declined and the Buddhist religion has advanced.

Now the Buddhist faith arose in India, but modern India chiefly professes Mohammedanism and has rejected Buddhism. The Catholic faith arose in western lands, but the modern nations of the west have set up another religion, the Protestant, and have forcibly opposed the Catholic faith. Hence we see that false doctrines sometimes perish and sometimes rise, but the teachings of Chou and Confucius remain everlastingly unchanged, causing the Chinese to establish their government, regulate their customs, and make their ceremonies and instruction most illustrious. Though a hundred plans be used to cause them to abandon these teachings, they are not in the least to be credited.

Thus did Tsêng reveal the positive faith that held his allegiance, and range himself squarely on the side of Confucius and those from whom Confucius drew his ideas. This carried with it an agnostic attitude towards the beliefs of the common man in spirits and demons—except those of the household, the departed ancestors. But there was no such agnosticism regarding Heaven and its decrees. Moreover at times we have noticed that he departs from the agnostic attitude regarding some of the popular divinities—as when he vowed a play to the goddess of mercy. He was not blind to the fact that there were mysteries which his philosophy could not fathom except on the basis of a providence that determined human fate. Thus, in recording the death of an acquaintance who should to all appearance have enjoyed a long and happy life, he observes that life and death and the reward of good men are inexplicable matters.<sup>42</sup> When his

<sup>42</sup> *Home Letters*, ninth moon, fifth, 1851.

brother was laying siege to Anking, and later to Nan-king, Tsêng warned him against impatience, urging him to do all that human skill could and trust the result to fate. He writes:<sup>43</sup>

I have observed for many years that whether affairs succeed or not, whether people gain fame or not, are settled by fate, not altogether by human will.

In another letter he elaborates the same thought thus:

Those who conduct great enterprises regard wisdom as first in importance and ability as secondary. The accomplishment of a great task rests half on human planning and half on Heaven's will. Some years ago when you were attacking Anking I told you that you need not try to act for Heaven. The strength of walls or trenches, the valour of the army's spirit, the energetic suppression of communications, resolute struggling against relieving enemy forces—these are matters where human planning can take the lead. The early or late capture of a city, the number of the enemy slain, the health or illness of our troops, whether good generals are wounded or not, the accession of relieving forces to the besieging armies or their reduction by having some sent off to relieve other places, whether the walls are completely razed or victory is reported without great effort—these are matters accomplished by Heaven's will.

For instance, if you are in the examination hall being examined, human thought determines whether the essays are written according to rule and the poetry is without mistakes in the even and slanting tones. But whether the officer selects them or you secure the degree early or late are matters governed by the will of Heaven. If you fear that Heaven's will cannot be relied on and try to go beyond the desire of the gods; or that human wisdom is not safe, and try various expedients, these arise from a lack of wisdom. In your impatience to capture the city you show a desire to usurp Heaven's management. I hope that you will always cherish thoughts of fear for Heaven and seri-

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, February 10, 1861.

ously and calmly let things take their natural course and they will turn out for the best."<sup>44</sup>

In spite of Tsêng's disbelief in the ordinary religious institutions of the common people he was compelled as an official to take part in the sacrifices required by custom in times of difficulty. Thus, when there was a drought in May and June, 1867, he went several times to the temple of the god of moisture to pray for rain, and on an expedition of this kind to another temple he sprinkled holy water on the ground; on the following day there was a copious downpour of rain, and Tsêng granted 4,000 *taels* of silver to the temple in token of his gratitude.<sup>45</sup> In April of the following year it was necessary in similar manner to pray for dry weather.<sup>46</sup> Just how far these and other unrecorded expeditions are mere accommodations to the popular beliefs we cannot be certain, but one gains the impression on the whole that Tsêng felt at times a little shaky in his scepticism concerning the popular articles of faith, and preferred to err on the side of following the custom in case there might be some truth in the popular beliefs. Apparently he was consistent in his opposition to following the foreign faiths.

One of the classical superstitions that Tsêng shared with his countrymen of that day was the belief that the "eight characters" exerted a profound influence on the fate of the individual. These eight characters are those designating the year, month, day, and hour of one's birth. It was generally thought that the nature of an individual

<sup>44</sup> *Home Letters*, September 3, 1863. The character 'Heaven' appears in this place to carry with it the idea of a personal God, not a mere blind impersonal thing. The fact that the Jesuits were willing to accept it as the term for God shows that they thought the term implied personality and intelligence.

<sup>45</sup> *Nienp'u*, XI, 18b.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 22b.

depended on the proportion of the different elements<sup>47</sup> occurring in the eight characters. In marriage it was necessary to consult a skilled student of this lore to determine whether the eight characters of the proposed bride and groom revealed temperamental affinity or the opposite. As a rule Tsêng was inclined to scoff at this lore, but in some letters in 1871 regarding the birth of a son to his eldest son he remarks: "Chi-tze has a son. He is thirty-three and it is a great event. But in the eight characters fire and water are lacking among the elements and I do not know whether he can live long or not."<sup>48</sup> The doubt proved true, for in September of the same year the child sickened and died, and Tsêng wrote saying: "When this child was first born I observed that in the eight characters fire and water were both lacking, just as in the case of Chia-i, water and wood, and so I feared he would scarcely grow to manhood, but did not dream that it would be so sudden. Since Chi-tze and his wife are both over thirty they cannot but grieve. But these are things entirely in Heaven's control which cannot be governed by human strength, and the only thing to be done is to receive the decree calmly and obey it quietly."<sup>49</sup>

To those of the West, one of the weaknesses in Chinese official life seems to be the corruption prevailing there—the universal "squeeze" and the reliance on favor or bribery for advancement. It is interesting to discover in Tsêng Kuo-fan a wholesome independence. He was one of the few who had risen purely by merit. He took great pains to warn his brothers and other members of the family against trusting in their connection with him for personal gain. Equally did he take the greatest pains not to lay himself under serious obligations to others.

<sup>47</sup> The five elements were fire, water, wood, metal, and earth, and one or another of them occurs in many of the ideograms used for denoting time.

<sup>48</sup> *Home Letters*, March 15, 1871.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, September 10, 1871.

He would not lightly accept favors nor was he willing to ingratiate himself with important men, even as he was careful not to put them under obligations to himself or encourage their attempts to win his favor. Such *grate* when granted seemed simply bait to ensnare the applicant, and if promotion should come it would leave the man with a burden that could not be discharged even by repaying tenfold the help he had received.<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, he set his face against the universal practice of using official position as a means for private enrichment. In 1849 he wrote home: "Ever since I was thirty I have held that it is a disgraceful thing to use official position to gain wealth; a shameful, abominable thing to make the official purse a source of profit to leave to one's descendants. I have therefore in my mind sworn an oath never to use public office as a means of securing a fortune. . . ."<sup>51</sup> A few years later when he held a position where he might easily have secured large amounts by well-recognised means of corruption, and his brother Kuo-hwang had drawn on him for 200 *taels*, he wrote a letter remonstrating with him. "When I was in Peking," he wrote, "I used to send money home, sometimes two hundred *taels* a year. Since I have led soldiers it was with great difficulty that I sent one hundred and fifty *taels* in the winter of 1854. In the third moon of this year Kuo-hwang drew for use two hundred *taels* at Li's home in Changsha. This amount I really cannot send again. Those who lead soldiers cannot escape making some gains. I am unable to prevent people from taking something, but I try not to take any [profit] myself and thus encourage the growth of the practice."<sup>52</sup> So earnest was he on this point that he included it among his eight fundamentals of life: "In holding office regard not loving

<sup>50</sup> *Home Letters*, August 7, 1847.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, April 13, 1849.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, December 26, 1856.

money as the fundamental thing.”<sup>53</sup> Nor were these empty platitudes. Tsêng bears a reputation in the land as having been singularly upright in financial matters. He was also careful not to permit petty graft on the part of his family. On one occasion when his second son was going from Changsha to his father's yamen in Anking (1863), Tsêng wrote warning him not to fly the commander-in-chief's flag and not to burden the officials along the way, who might otherwise feel constrained to spend time and money in his entertainment. Tsêng had no desire to place himself under obligations for courtesies rendered to a member of his family who was not traveling on public business, nor permit the use of his high rank for personal gain.<sup>54</sup>

This feeling of independence and honesty is shown in another way in letters home and to other officials, which in a land of circumlocution are at times almost blunt in their plain speaking, though always punctilious in courteous language. His memorials and letters to superior officials in the capital are perhaps more elegantly worded, but are seldom the wielding of an “empty pen.” In the instances where his opinion and those of Li Hung-chang and Tso Tsung-tang were sought regarding the use of foreign soldiery, there is great contrast in the replies. While his associates produce the impression of trying not to commit themselves too much in either direction Tsêng writes plainly and frankly.<sup>55</sup> He had great contempt for the habit many officials had of falsification in their reports of victories or defeats, as shown in the affair where Wang Hsin and Tso Tsung-tang inserted a false report of victory into a dispatch to Peking in 1854.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, April 4, 1861.

<sup>54</sup> *Household Instructions*, September 24, 1863.

<sup>55</sup> See memorial in chapter XII above.

<sup>56</sup> *Home Letters*, May 16, 1854.

Tsêng Kuo-fan's ideals of character are those of the *Classics*. He sets before his brothers and sons the virtues of filial piety, brotherly submission, benevolence, and right. In the development of character eight virtues were to be sought after, industry, frugality, stability (or firmness of will), clear perception, faithfulness, reciprocity (doing to others nothing which you dislike to have done to you), modesty, and integrity.<sup>57</sup> In the letter of farewell instruction to his sons, drawn up on the eve of his departure for T'ientsin to settle the massacre claims, he elaborated four chief theses:

Act sincerely and carefully when you are alone and your heart will be at peace.

Order yourself in reverence and your conduct will be firm.

Seek benevolence and men will delight in you.

Labour industriously and the gods will respect you.<sup>58</sup>

True to his convictions about the great value of books, Tsêng constantly took pains to fire his brothers with the same devotion to learning that characterised his own life. A day seldom passed, even amid the turmoil of the battlefield or the multifarious duties of civil office, when he did not read from works of classics, history, or poetry, and turn his hand to writing essays or other compositions. He was a constant diarist, though unfortunately for our purposes the records of some of the most valuable years were lost in the capture of his papers before Kiukiang. He tried to stir up the same spirit of industry in his juniors, placing their studies first on the list of household virtues, calling for their compositions from time to time, giving careful heed to the selection of suitable teachers for them, and exhorting them in season and out of season. If they

<sup>57</sup> *Home Instructions*, April 28, 1866. In one of his poems he says there is no greater excellency than reciprocity, *Home Letters*, fifth moon, fifth.

<sup>58</sup> *Home Instructions*, July 6, 1870.

were going forward suitably he praised them, and, if not, he reproved them or tried to shame them into rivalling the sons of those who, with fewer advantages, were forging far ahead.

In a letter written early in 1843 he mentions the three indispensable conditions of progress, the 'will to learn,' understanding, and constant application. "If you have the 'will to learn' it will not be pleasant to drift along; with understanding you know that learning is inexhaustible and will not consider that you have enough—like the river spirit gazing on the sea, or the frog from the well viewing the skies, both without understanding; if you are possessed of constancy there is nothing that you cannot accomplish. Of these three you cannot spare a single one."

We are not left without many indications of the amount of work he himself did. In the last four months of 1844, for instance, he carefully read and annotated the complete works of Wang Ching (one hundred Chinese volumes), the literary works of Kwei Chen-ch'üan (forty volumes), the book of Odes (twenty volumes), and the historical books of the later Han Dynasty (one hundred volumes).<sup>59</sup> During the busy years after he entered on his military career, he could not perform such heavy tasks, but he made it a rule not to let a day pass without a prescribed amount of study, and, in order that he might not fall into the temptation to neglect it, he laid out definite programmes for this work. In a homely illustration he compares study to cooking. If one prepares meals over a good, steady fire the task is easily accomplished, but if the fire is alternately kindled and permitted to die out the meal is never cooked.<sup>60</sup> In another place he tells

<sup>59</sup> *Home Letters*, December 30, 1844.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, December 2, and December 26, 1856.



us that the philosopher Chu Hsi<sup>61</sup> likened study to the cooking of meat. "First, meat is boiled over a hot fire, then allowed to simmer over a slow fire. Likewise to your studies you must bring the hot fire of youth. Without the preliminary boiling over the hot fire the juices are not brought forth and there is no flavor in the dish; mere seething never produces savoury viands."<sup>62</sup>

The place where one happened to be was a good enough place to study. The question was not one of place at all, but of the purpose within. Does one truly have the compelling impulse to study? "If you can apply yourself and are independent," he wrote to his brother, Kuo-hwang, who thought of becoming a teacher in order to secure the necessary leisure and incentive to study, "you can study at your own fireside, or in wildernesses, or in busy market places, or whether you are raising vegetables or swine. But if you cannot apply yourself and are not independent, you can never study, whether at home, or in a quiet country place, or in the haunts of the gods and fairies. Why must you choose a good time or a suitable place for study, when you simply need to ask yourself whether your determination is firm or not?"<sup>63</sup>

Shortly before his death he wrote out four rules for the guidance of his heirs because he desired that the rising generations of the Tseng family should become self-reliant and zealous in their studies. "1. When you read new books aim at speed. If you do not read much you will be too ignorant. 2. In reviewing old books you should aim at thoroughness. Unless you recite them from memory you easily forget them. 3. There must be no cessation in the practice of writing. Poor writing is like

<sup>61</sup> A philosopher and the orthodox commentator on the Confucian classics in the Sung Dynasty.

<sup>62</sup> *Home Letters*, October 21, 1842.

<sup>63</sup> *Home Letters*, 1842, tenth moon, 26.

a body without clothing or a mountain without trees. 4. In composing essays you should think profoundly. Not to compose well is like a man who is dumb and cannot talk, or a horse that is lame and unable to walk.'<sup>64</sup>

Never very robust—he tells his brothers that they have all inherited weak constitutions from their mother—Tsêng had to give much attention to his health. During the years he spent in Peking he was never entirely well, and in 1842 one of the men whom he consulted told him that his complaint would yield more to periods of quiet resting than to medicine.<sup>65</sup> Experience with many doctors led him, about 1857, to give them up altogether, with their remedies, since most of them were unskilled and did seven parts of damage to three parts of good.<sup>66</sup> At the age of thirty-two he gave up the practice of smoking and advised his brothers to do likewise when they should reach the same age, but he did not think that one should necessarily abandon wine in moderate quantities.<sup>67</sup> Early rising he considered of great importance, not only for progress in one's career but for health.<sup>68</sup>

Among the discussions of hygiene found in Tsêng's letters the most comprehensive rules are perhaps those in a letter dated July 16, 1866:

Since old age approaches I can at best hope to remain in high office only a year and a half or so, not longer. When I reflect that we brothers are not blessed with robust health and our descendants will be even weaker, we ought constantly to seek ways of building up our strength, and not depend on the taking of medicine from time to time. There are five general rules: 1, regularity in eating and sleeping, 2, the restraint of anger, 3, regulation of sexual intercourse, 4, washing the feet before re-

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, December 5, 1871.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, ninth moon, eighteenth, 1842.

<sup>66</sup> *Home Instructions*, eleventh moon, fourth, 1860.

<sup>67</sup> *Home Letters*, February 28, 1852.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, April 24, 1860.

tiring, and, 5, after each of the two daily meals a walk of three thousand paces. The restraint of anger I have thus explained in a letter, "In physical care the fundamental thing is not to get angry." The two principles of regularity in meals and sleep the honourable Sing-kong practised forty years, and I have been doing it seven. I recently tried taking three thousand paces after meals and shall never again give it up through carelessness.

With a modern point of view he also insists on the value of sunshine and fresh air. "If the house is too damp people will be affected and it will injure the digestion. Where a house is high and the inner court small, the air does not enter easily, and the same is true regarding the sunshine. You must find some way to drive out the dampness and you will not get sick."<sup>69</sup>

In the same letter where he instructed his sons about their studies he proposed six rules of hygiene in order that they might not fail by reason of poor health: (1) one thousand paces after meals, (2) a foot-bath before retiring,<sup>70</sup> (3) the avoidance of anger, (4) regular periods of quiet resting, (5) the regular practice of archery (which he considered an excellent way to develop the muscles), and (6) a simple breakfast at dawn of a single bowl of rice without other dishes.

During the last two years of his life his old eye trouble returned; he had already lost the use of one eye at the time of the T'ientsin massacre. Attacks of dizziness troubled him, too, from time to time. Only a few days before his death an especially severe attack, which caused his friends no little alarm, occurred suddenly while he was being borne in his sedan chair to greet a guest at the riverside. This ill health made him all the more eager to conserve what strength remained to him and to insist

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, February 29, 1860.

<sup>70</sup> *I.e.*, to insure free circulation of the blood.

that his descendants should be taught the rules of hygiene and the development of their physique.

The callousness of the Chinese to suffering was amply displayed in the Taiping rebellion, recalling to us the fact that they retained the mediaeval frame of mind. The Crimean and American Civil wars saw the beginnings of modern nursing on the battlefields, and were conducted with some regard to human suffering, but the Taiping rebellion was cruel on both sides. Tsêng had no scruples whatever about beheading the rebels he captured. In 1861 his two brothers, being concerned about the great toll of human life, wrote their sentiments to their brother. In reply Tsêng assured them that the more rebels slain the better, for then the poison could be driven out; the religion of the Heavenly Father and Heavenly Brother should be destroyed together with the officials T'ien Yen (Celestial Rest) and T'ien Yu (Celestial Pleasure).<sup>71</sup> "Even if we could cause [Duke] Chou and Confucius to be born now they would by no means think of anything but destroying rebels. And if one intends to destroy them one should not repine over slaying many of them and driving their turbans back to the farms." In the capture of Anking twenty thousand of the rebels were slain by the captors.<sup>72</sup> In the operations about Nanking we have one instance recorded where after a bloody battle at San Ho K'ou, a like number were decapitated.<sup>73</sup> Following the escalade at Nanking the gates were shut and the rebels hunted down in the streets with a slaughter of approximately a hundred thousand.<sup>74</sup> Not long after that event, at Fuchow, General Pao Ch'ao executed forty thousand in cold blood.<sup>74</sup> None of these massacres appears to have troubled the minds of the people of that time. Nor did the

<sup>71</sup> *Home Letters*, July 19, 1861.

<sup>72</sup> *Record of Chief Events*, II, 6b.

<sup>73</sup> *Record of the Chief Events*, III, 10b.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 14a.

beheading of the surrendered *wangs* at Soochow, which so aroused the wrath of Gordon that he tried to shoot Li Hung-chang, secure from Tsêng more than the passing comment already recorded above: "Li Shao-ch'üan, when he killed the eight *wangs* who surrendered at Soochow, showed that his eye was clear and his hand heavy."<sup>76</sup> Such callousness to suffering, such approbation of slaughter as we find recorded in the cases quoted (and many others might be mentioned) are not, I believe, due to unusual cruelty on Tsêng's part. They may more fittingly be regarded as a Chinese counterpart to the spirit of the Spaniards in the Inquisition, or the French in the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, or the burning of witches in Salem. These rebels were more than enemies; they added to their rebellion against the Throne blasphemy against the sacred writings of the ancients and disdain for the orthodox faith of the fathers; they were outside the pale of humanity, they were a poison in the body politic that must be utterly eradicated.

Of Tsêng's attitude towards foreign relations we have made mention from time to time in previous chapters. In the days of his service in Peking, before he had any contact with them or knowledge of them, he felt that if they could be kept out of China it would be a benefit to the country.<sup>76</sup> In 1849, when the question of foreign entry into the city of Canton was being considered, Tsêng writes home: "The English barbarians have renewed their request but viceroy Hsü has been correct in his management. If the foreign barbarians would only decide to submit and ultimately not enter the city there would never be any foreign menace and the emperor's heart would be gratified to the utmost."<sup>77</sup> When his day came to lead troops we have already seen how eager he was

<sup>76</sup> *Excerpts from Diary*, II, p. 38.      <sup>76</sup> *Home Letters*, *passim*.

<sup>77</sup> *Home Letters*, May 8, 1849.

for cannon, realising that he could do nothing without them. Later, we have noted the need he felt of steamers and launches for developing his campaigns, and with what enthusiastic support he greeted Yung Wing when the latter proposed the establishment of ironworks at Shanghai. His objection at first to rifles and his ultimate reconciliation to their use, his attitude towards the employment of foreign forces for other than defensive purposes, are all familiar to us. But we are aware also of the gradual evolution in thought that marked him at his death as one of China's most far-seeing and boldest statesmen, as regards the reconstruction of China after foreign models.

In the conduct of foreign policies his early opposition to Westerners was modified by the inevitable logic of events. He learned something of their strength and of their persistence. In reply to one of Li Hung-chang's letters in 1862, Tsêng wrote concerning a policy: "Barbarian affairs are fundamentally hard to manage, but the roots do not lie outside Confucius' four principles<sup>78</sup> of faithfulness, sincerity, magnanimity, and respect. Magnanimity means generosity, respect means to act carefully, and sincerity simply not to speak falsehoods—actually a most difficult thing. We ought to start from this word. What we have spoken and agreed to today, we should not change tomorrow because of some slight advantage or difficulty."<sup>79</sup> The same sentiment is slightly amplified in another letter a short time later, where the question of employing foreign troops is under discussion:

As to intercourse with foreigners the important principles may be summed up in four sentences, namely, "In your words be faithful and sincere; in actions be magnanimous and respectful.

<sup>78</sup> The word translated here "principles" is literally "characters."

<sup>79</sup> *Miscellaneous Dispatches*, XVIII, 17.

Join with them in defence but not in attack. First keep apart and later become friendly." Faithful means not having a heart of deceit. Sincere means not being deceitful in words. Magnanimous means generous, respectful means modest and careful. Whether they agree with us or oppose us we ought constantly to follow these two sentences and never fail in them.

Having discussed the third point in other places, he omits what would be but a repetition here, and goes on to the fourth:

As to the sentence "First keep apart and later become friendly," since certainly we strive that our military strength may suffice to stand alone, we ought first to attack alone in one or two places and if our men prove to be well set up and undaunted so as not to appear ridiculous in the eyes of foreigners, it will not be too late to become friendly with them. In acting according to these various points, though for a time there should be friction and quarrelling, in the long run it must be possible to secure mutual harmony and peace.<sup>80</sup>

It is clear that Tsêng was not willing to act as though the foreigner were an inferior. On the contrary, it had become evident to him in the course of his dealings with them that, while there were points of difference between the two races, Chinese and foreign, only the Confucian principles of virtue and reciprocity would suffice to make their relations friendly in the long run. He set his face against the practice of seeking immediate advantage through deceit, to the eventual undoing of the Chinese cause through the natural fruits of such a short-sighted policy.

On the matter of opening the country to the unlimited exploitation of the foreign merchant he was far from willing. As in the case of the establishment of ironworks and arsenals, he realised that foreign help was needed, but did not desire the foreigner to come in and take away

<sup>80</sup> *Miscellaneous Correspondence*, XVIII, 29b, 30a.

employment from Chinese laborers or profits from Chinese merchants. In the development of a fleet of merchant ships he would have Chinese employed at first in inferior positions, until they could learn how to manage these things for themselves, and then take them over. He desired few of the novelties which were beginning to flood the country, preferring to go on in the good old ways with occupations and products continuing ever the same. Of foreign trade he wrote (but I cannot ascertain whether it was early or late in his career).

Generally speaking, the foreigners of the west have been devouring each other for the last few hundred years. The chief method of doing this is to take away the gain of merchants of other countries, after which their country can attain its purpose. The motive of their coming to China, establishing factories everywhere and dealing in all kinds of goods, is their desire to carry out the deceitful purpose which lies in their minds and jeopardise the means of livelihood of our people. Since the beginning of the war the Chinese people have endured extreme suffering as though in water or fire. The foreigners have opened to general trade the three and the five ports, the Yangtse commerce, and their business grows day by day; while our humbler people are in difficulty without any place for redress, just as though they were hanging upside down. If now you yield to the demands of the foreigners to deal in salt, the licensed merchants will find their means of livelihood reduced. If you accede to their demands to build warehouses, the means of livelihood of the stores and shops that collect goods will be reduced. If you permit steam launches to ply on the smaller streams you will eat into the livelihood of the crews and rowers of large and small boats. If you permit them to establish telegraphs and railways you will take away the living of the cartmen, the inns and the carriers. Of all the various things they are seeking for we should try only the one idea of using foreign instruments for mining coal to secure the permanent advantage of China.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Kawasaki, *To-ho no I-jin*, p. 124.



From this it appears to be clear that he would have resisted, with whatever force he could summon, the carnival of concessions that later gave into the control of foreigners many of the chief resources of the country, or hypothecated a large share of the revenues to pay interest on loans.

Whatever his achievements as an administrator and leader of armies, Tsêng seems always to have felt that the true home of his spirit was in the literature and philosophy of his native land. His letters display a charm of style which have transformed them into models of literary composition—translations carry but a feeble reflection of the original skill of composition. He was also an essayist of no mean ability and compiled an anthology of selected poems from eighteen of the most famous poets of the Middle Kingdom. There are those who rate him as foremost among the great writers and scholars of the Manchu Dynasty, though the point is not unanimously conceded.

## CHAPTER XVII

### BY WAY OF SUMMARY

IN the middle of the nineteenth century the Taiping rebellion arrested the attention of the world. It all but ruined the central provinces of China. That so great a catastrophe should have sprung from the brain of a man who, in his palace at Nanking, revealed such meager ability, who was so notoriously dominated by the king of the East and his own feeble relatives, is almost unthinkable. After consideration of all the factors and examination of the sources at hand, I have adopted the theory that the real author of the movement was the man whom the imperialist sources claim to have been the teacher of Hung Siu-ch'üan and Fêng Yun-shan, the man Chu Kiu-t'ao, and that it was he who in the early days of the movement came to be known as the T'ienteh-wang, and at the beginning was supposed to be the chosen emperor to restore the Ming Dynasty. The recently published *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi* also asserts that Fêng Yun-shan and Hung Siu-ch'üan followed this Chu, and states that after his death Hung succeeded to the headship of the movement.<sup>1</sup> I believe that this death did not take place until the Taiping host broke out of Yungan and the T'ienteh-wang was captured by the imperialists. He assumed the name Hung Ta-ch'üan, which he himself admitted to be a false one. His confession fits so well into the scheme and so completely supplies the effective

<sup>1</sup> *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi*, XII, 13.

motive for this uprising that I have little doubt that he and Fêng—working together on the basis of Hung's supposed revelations from God—organised and planned the revolution, and that only the circumstances of his capture and the death of Fêng soon after brought it into the control of the fanatical elements whose incapacity for rule and whose emphasis of their fantastic religious views proved eventually the undoing of their cause. What might have been a national movement thus became a sectarian outburst which alienated the substantial elements of society, inducing them to support the Manchu Dynasty in preference to so eccentric a group as the Taiping schismatics. It also explains the defection of the Triads who gave their support at first and withdrew from the movement in the very moment when it was bursting forth from the hills of Kwangsi to conquer its way to Nanking. Such a change of front is explicable only on some such theory as that set forth here.

The Western nations were arrested by the news that a Christian state was being set up, that the Taipings accepted the doctrines from across the sea and had even received instruction from missionaries and invited them to come to Nanking. Not long after their conquest of Nanking representatives of three powers went from Shanghai to study their political and religious views. They discovered their political incapacity and learned that their religion, while ostensibly based upon the Bible, interpreted the Christian Scriptures in the light of Confucian and Buddhist ideas. Moreover, with an almost revolting anthropomorphism, they claimed Deity for Hung, the T'ienwang, proclaiming him the second son of God, while Yang, king of the East, asserted that he was the Holy Ghost and Saviour from Disease. They were possessed with a strong spirit of iconoclasm and gave much attention to the teaching of the Ten Commandments and

the outlines of their faith, while unlimited opportunities for loot kept their armies full. Leadership, however, declined steadily and internal quarrels detached their best captains from the cause. In 1858 new generals of real genius came to the fore, notably the Chungwang and the Yingwang, under whom the waning rebellion gained new life.

Such political, religious, and intellectual weakness on the part of the Taipings would have led to their early downfall had the Chinese government been strong and united. But the earlier rulers of the Manchu Dynasty had made such unity impossible by parcelling out the civil and military power so as to frustrate anti-dynastic uprisings, like that of the famous Wu San-kwei, against whom K'anghsi had so desperate a struggle. Local autonomy was fostered, and the system of government so exaggerated this localism that it became impracticable to mobilise considerable armies. Moreover, the central government had no steady revenues apart from the contribution of the provinces, and the provinces did not furnish enough to support national armies. Governors were therefore unwilling to meet the expenses necessary to equip and maintain strong forces for imperial needs. These handicaps made it all but impossible for Tsêng Kuo-fan to raise armies at all, because he had nothing but high-sounding titles which did not command the needed funds. The governor of Hunan, and somewhat later the governor and viceroy of Hupeh, did give him a measure of support, but it was not until towards the end of the rebellion that his position as viceroy of the Two Kiang, with Li Hung-chang and Tso Tsung-tang as governors under him—both of them his protégés,—provided him with the money needed to increase his levies sufficiently to bring the rebels to bay. When Tsêng Kuo-ch'ian marched to Nanking to begin the siege he had but

twenty thousand men, but by the middle of 1864, when Nanking was captured, some fifty thousand served under his banner. With all the income that he could secure by contributions from various provinces and from his own vice-regal domain, not to mention the sums realised from the sale of honors and patents to official rank, his entire account for the eleven years ending with the fall of Nanking only approximated 21,300,000 *tacsl*! Here we have a clue to understanding why it required so long to crush this movement.

If we are tempted to regard the work of Tsêng as being too dilatory, as showing too much prudence and caution where dash and energy would seem to have been required, the above-named embarrassments must not be ignored. Nor can we pass over the patent fact that the regulars proved to be utterly useless in this war, and that without the militia the rebellion could not have been suppressed at all. If, then, Tsêng could bring the latter into action only in small groups of a few thousand each, because he lacked the means to secure scores of thousands, and if in addition we recall the fact that the rebels readily enrolled hundreds of thousands of the riffraff of China lusting after loot, we are not justly entitled to lay the fault at Tsêng's door. It was one of the defects of Chinese government which could not be remedied by anyone caught in the system. He had the thankless task of discovering funds for armies as well as of winning victories, and these funds had to be secured often against the will of officials who thought they had better claims to the same funds; and besides jealous confrères, he had to overcome the red tape and vested interests of officialdom until his end was finally gained.

Other exigencies that Tsêng had to face and overcome were: (1) His own lack of military training. He was a civil official and an accomplished scholar—never a cap-

tain of troops. (2) Lack of encouragement, at times amounting to actual opposition from the officials and gentry of the provinces in which he operated, because of his being for much of his career outside the line of regular administration. (3) Friction, at times, with the soldiers and officers of the regular army, who were naturally jealous of this irregular force. (4) His inability, until he became viceroy, to get possession of funds without begging for them from the regular officials. (5) The necessity of withstanding the frequent panics into which Taiping successes or imperial failures threw the Peking government, causing them to order him to abandon strategic positions and chase after some elusive insurgent king. (6) The snares of Taiping commanders more brilliant than he to draw him and his men from their proper objectives. (7) At times, great peril to himself, and at others (what is perhaps almost as important) "loss of face." In all these things he showed himself patient, enduring, and brave.

We must be careful not to claim too much for him. The plans which he so steadfastly carried out sometimes originated with others, in particular the gifted Kiang Chung-yuan and the incompetent Saishanga, to the latter of whom he owed the idea of the "new model" army, and to the insistence of the former, his flotilla. But it was his own skill that surrounded him with a galaxy of faithful and able officers, many of whom reached high rank both during and after the Taiping rebellion—Hu Lin-yi, Pao Ch'ao, Yang Tsai-fu, P'eng Yu-ling, Li Hung-chang, Tso Tsung-tang, Li Han-chang, and his brother, Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan, not to mention a host of lesser lights and several who would have become equally famous had they not succumbed in the struggle. Through the support of such reliable men Tsêng not only brought the Taiping rebellion to a close—and would doubtless have done so with-

out foreign aid—but also gave to China a higher and better type of official than she would have had without his work.

At the close of the war he had become the most powerful official in the land, and his career was the precedent whereby several of those who served under him reached the highest provincial positions without actually passing through the lower grades. This was a radical departure from the usual practice, and one that calls forth comment from Li Ung Bing in his history. Tsêng himself, in the effort to suppress the Nienfei, held for a time power, not only over Chinese soldiers, but even over Manchu Bannermen in the north. And he achieved the suppression of the Nienfei by calling back to his side the same men who had supported him in the earlier war, though Li Hung-chang reaped the glory for which Tsêng had prepared the way. Such a service, both direct and through such men as these, is a sufficient refutation of the sarcasm of Morse<sup>2</sup> who, speaking of Li and Tsêng, says: "Of the two, Tsêng had been brought little into contact with foreigners, and, if his sense of humour were small, might pride himself on having suppressed the great rebellion without their aid." It furnishes ground also for judging the opinion of Sir Robert Hart, who, as regards Tsêng's settlement of the T'ientsin massacre in 1870, holds that "his general inaction, his fear of the people, and his want of decision have led people very generally to wonder how he won his former laurels, and to think that he is an overrated man, of but mediocre ability (in which opinion I fully concur)."<sup>3</sup> From the story of Tsêng and his work during the terrible years from 1853 to 1864—considering all the circumstances—such a reflection seems unwarranted. Sir Robert Hart can have had no

<sup>2</sup> Morse, *International Relations*, II, 207.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to E. B. Drew, September 28, 1870, quoted in *ibid.*, II, 208.

sufficient knowledge of the obstacles overcome, nor do the documents in the T'ientsin settlement itself seem to me to justify his strictures.

As to foreign relations, it is true that Tsêng had not been brought into much contact with Europeans. His early attitude of hostility to them was, however, modified as time went on. His objection to using them in the Chinese armies arose not through anti-foreignism but because he preferred that China should not become entangled in dangerous complications through their employment. He did at times object to the undue extension of foreign trade and methods of communication, but he gave attention to building steamers and, towards the end of his life, advocated the sending of students abroad for study. Some of his letters and memorials show that he kept in touch with foreign politics more closely than the great majority of Chinese officials.

A word may be added on a point which has not been discussed in the body of this book. Was the Manchu Dynasty worth saving? Today Tsêng Kuo-fan does not command the consideration that was once accorded him. The splendid memorial temple erected to him at Changsha has suffered much at the hands of the republican armies which have held the city since 1911—though a part of the gardens has been yielded to the family for a girls' collegiate school, of which Tsêng's great-granddaughter is principal. In the minds of some, his name has been associated with the Manchu Dynasty, which is anathema. But the memories of Chinese patriots are as short as those of all their kind throughout the world. They ignore the unpalatable but certain fact that the voice of the reformer and revolutionist has carried weight in China only since the end of the nineteenth century, and that Tsêng and his army represented the true will of the nation aroused against the Taiping rebels, who struck



at the roots of many of the social and moral customs in the life of the people.

And there is the further fact, that if the rebellion had been successful it would probably have divided the country into two nations, or have brought on more wars, for the north never rallied to the Taiping call as did the south—and despite the success of the revolution of 1911, the country appears to be hopelessly divided today, largely on geographical lines. Such a division would have been a calamity, for then the thought of preserving the territorial integrity of an Asiatic empire was not granted even the honor of lip-service. By holding together the country, even under the Manchu Dynasty, Tsêng gave it power to survive until a day when the empire builders were discredited if not checked. When a happier China realises something of this consideration it may again grant to Tsêng the soldier and Tsêng the statesman what it readily concedes to Tsêng the loyal servant of those whom he served and to Tsêng the Princely Man of Confucius' ideal.

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The Chinese of the period under consideration have produced abundant material covering the Taiping rebellion and the subsequent careers of the principal actors in that movement. For Tsêng Kuo-fan we have not only his voluminous collected works but also his diary in photographic reproduction. There is also the set of works on the Hunan army, which gives a complete account of their campaigns both in the Taiping and the Moham-medan rebellions.

Two or three histories of the Taiping rebellion are to be found in Chinese and one in Japanese, and there is also a good biography of Tsêng Kuo-fan in Japanese. I have made use of all of these. On the other hand, nothing in English is satisfactory. There are some excellent accounts of the Kiangsu campaigns, where foreign volunteers participated under Ward and Gordon, and the translation of a story of the inception of the movement according to the narrative of a relative of Hung himself. But the middle period and the assembling of forces that eventually crushed the rebellion are very meagerly sketched for us in any English account, Li Ung-bing's being almost the only attempt. General histories of modern China treat of the beginnings of the revolt and its development until 1853 or 1854, apparently depending on the careful work done by Dr. W. H. Medhurst in gathering the pamphlets issued by the rebels and translating them, and on his articles in the *Peking Gazette*s, which enable them to cover the story until the repulse of

the rebels near T'ientsin. Then a gap usually occurs in the tale until 1858 or 1860, where the *Autobiography* of the Chungwang and the elaborate accounts of the exploits of Gordon and the French permit them to resume the thread of the narrative.

It is astounding to realise how little use has been made of Chinese materials in these histories and how frequently the important work of Tsêng Kuo-fan is passed over with scarcely a comment. Even Li Ung-bing has not made as full use of Chinese sources available to him as he might have done.

In the following bibliography I have not attempted to give an exhaustive list of Chinese works, but only those which deal with Tsêng Kuo-fan himself or general accounts of the rebellion. Those from non-Chinese sources I have made fuller, so as to include whatever may help to throw light on the period or on the participants in the war. It will be observed that there is practically no literature on Tsêng Kuo-fan in a European language, little or nothing on Tso Tsung-tang, and not a particularly creditable list on Li Hung-chang.

## I

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Indispensable for a survey of the literature.

## II

## SOURCES

## A. SOURCES: ON TSÊNG KUO-FAN AND THE TAIPING REBELLION.

1. *The Collected Works of Tsêng Wen-cheng*. 156 parts. Published in a number of editions. The one in my possession

was issued in 1876. The parts of most use for our purposes are:

- (a) *Dispatches*, or Memorials to the Throne. 30 vols.
- (b) *The Nienp'u*, or Annals. 12 vols.
- (c) *Miscellaneous Correspondence* (to officials). 33 vols.
- (d) *Excerpts from his Diary*. 2 vols. This is a little collection from the complete diary, arranged by topics, and consists largely of thoughts on literature, philosophy, and administration, not so much biographical as contemplative.

2. *The Home Letters of Tsêng Wen-cheng*. 10 vols. These are published in many editions and are widely read. With them are also to be included two additional volumes entitled *The Home Instructions of Tsêng Wen-cheng*, 2 vols., addressed to his sons and giving them his opinions on various matters. They are all of great interest to one who would understand Chinese ideals as set forth by a thoughtful and earnest follower of Confucius. A second supplementary volume contains the commemorative essays, poems, and scrolls sent to the family after Tsêng's death.
3. *Record of the Chief Events in the Life of Tsêng Wen-cheng*. Compiled under the patronage of Li Hung-chang and Tsêng Kuo-ch'üan by Wang Ting-an. Also in many editions. This is a brief biography and contains much interesting material.
4. *The Diary of Tsêng Kuo-fan*. 40 vols. Issued privately by photographic reproduction of the manuscript. Unfortunately there are gaps of serious importance, when Tsêng's papers were all lost in the capture of his flagship at Kiukiang, early in 1855.

#### B. SOURCES: INSURGENT.

1. *The Visions of Hung-Siu-tshuen and Origin of the Kwang-si Rebellion*, by the Rev. Theodore Hamberg. Hongkong, 1854. Written from material furnished by Hung Jen-tah (Hung Jin), later the Kanwang, and our chief source for the

knowledge of the rebellion as far as Hung Siu-ch'üan is concerned.

2. *Books of the T'hae-ping-wang Dynasty and Trip of the Hermes to Nanking*, also *Visit of Dr. Charles Taylor to Chin-kiang*. Shanghai, 1853.

Contents :

1. The Book of Religious Precepts of the T'hae-ping Dynasty.
2. The Trimetrical Classic.
3. The Ode for Youth.
4. The Book of Celestial Decrees, and Declarations of the Imperial Will.
5. The Book of Declarations of the Divine Will, made during the Heavenly Father's descent upon earth.
6. The Imperial Declaration of T'hae-ping.
7. Proclamations issued by Imperial Appointment, from the Eastern and Western Princes.
8. Arrangement of the Army of the T'hae-ping Dynasty.
9. Regulations of the Army of the T'hae-ping Dynasty.
10. A new Calendar for the 3d year of the T'hae-ping Dynasty.
11. Ceremonial Regulations of the T'hae-ping Dynasty.
12. The Book of Genesis, chapters I-XVIII (notes only, not text).

Appended to these are two valuable supplements and a critique on No. 6 above :

1. History of the Kwang-se Rebellion, gathered from the *Peking Gazette*. Official Proclamations, and other Public Documents.
2. Connection between Foreign Missionaries and the Kwang-se Insurrection.

The above books are of the utmost value, for they give us what the Taipings had to say for their own cause. Some of their contents are summarised in the supplementary volume

of the *P'ing-ting Yuch-fei Chi-lueh*. Some also are reproduced in the works of Brine, Lindley, Callery, and Yvan, and others. They were originally published in the *North China Herald*, having been translated by Dr. W. H. Medhurst, Chinese secretary of the *Hermes* expedition to Nanking.

3. *The Autobiography of the Chungwang*. Translation from the Chinese by Walter T. Lay. Shanghai, 1865.

A Chinese text is published in a volume entitled *Chung Kuo Pi Shi* (Secret History of China), published, apparently in Japan, in 1904. The original confession as written by this chief before his execution at Nanking was much longer, but Tsêng Kuo-fan had it edited. The original is said to be in the Tsêng family home. From it we have a good account of the last days of the movement, but it flits from one place to another and from one date backwards and forwards in a bewildering manner. The best use that has been made of this, in a description of the campaign for the relief of Anking, is by S. W. Williams in *The Middle Kingdom*.

4. *Taiping T'ien-kuo Yeh Shi* (Unofficial History of the Celestial Kingdom of Taiping). Shanghai, 1923.

This book by an anonymous writer is a mine of information about the Taiping movement, probably written by one who was a secretary at Nanking and had access to official records, books, and pamphlets. A number of the books referred to in No. 2 are here given in the original. Moreover, lists of officials, civil and military, are included, which enable us to understand their government better. There are also biographical sketches of the chief men of Taipingdom. It is by far the most useful book for comprehending the insurgent side that has yet appeared.

5. The Kan Wang's *Sketch of the Rebellion*, together with sundry other statements. Translated from the Chinese by Walter T. Lay. Shanghai, 1865 (reprinted from the *North China Herald*, July 15-August 19, 1865).

This sketch is by the same man who furnished Theodore

Hamberg with his account of the early history of the movement, but of course gives a later picture. Other statements included in this pamphlet are from Hung Fu-t'ien, the second T'ienwang, and two lesser lights. There is considerable evidence of friction between this K'auwang and the Chungwang.

6. "The Confession of Hung Ta-ch'üan," copied from the *China Mail* by Brine in *The Tae-ping Rebellion*, pp. 131 ff. This will be found copied entire in this book. Although rejected by some, I am inclined to accept it as substantially true, in spite of apparent falsifications here and there. It throws a flood of light on the origin of the enterprise.

#### C. SOURCES: FOREIGN. I.

1. Files of the *North China Herald* after 1851.  
Much that was of importance about the Taipings found its way to the columns of this journal. Its place of publication, Shanghai, gave it a great advantage over its rival, the *China Mail*, which was published in Hongkong. It printed translations of many of the decrees recorded in the *Peking Gazettes*. See Cordier for a list of the most important articles.
2. Files of the *China Mail*, Hongkong, 1851-1865.
3. *Reports of Ministers, Commissioners, and Consuls of the United States*:  
  - 32d Congress, 2d session, *Senate Ex. Documents*, 22, 64.
  - 33d Congress, 1st session, *House Ex. Documents*, 123.
  - 35th Congress, 2d session, *Senate Ex. Documents*, 22.
  - 36th Congress, 1st session, *Senate Ex. Documents*, 39.
  - 37th Congress, 3d session, *Senate Ex. Documents*, 34.
4. *Parliamentary Papers*:  
  - (a) *Papers respecting the Civil War in China*, 1853.
  - (b) *Correspondence respecting the Attack on Foreign Settlement at Shanghai*, 1854.
  - (c) *Papers relating to the Opium Trade in China*, 1842-1856. Little or nothing on the Taiping rebellion.

- (d) *Correspondence respecting Insults in China*, 1857.
  - (e) *Papers relating to the Proceedings of Her Majesty's Naval Forces at Canton*. With Appendix. 1857. Chiefly concerning the entry into Canton.
  - (f) *Papers respecting Lord Elgin's Special Mission to China and Japan*. Maps. 1859. Very important, because Elgin went up the Yangtse into the heart of Taipingdom.
  - (g) *Correspondence, 1858-1860, respecting Affairs in China*. 5 parts. 1860.
  - (h) *Papers respecting the opening of the Yangtze-Kiang to Trade; and on the Rebellion in China*. 7 parts. Maps. 1861-1863.
  - (i) *Papers on Affairs of China*. 6 parts. 1864. Anglo-Chinese Fleet and Dismissal of W. T. Lay from the Customs Service, Opening of the Yang-tze-Kiang, Treaty Rights, etc.
5. *British Consular Reports. Reports from H. M. Consuls in China for the years 1854 to 1861*. 8 parts. 1855-1863. For years 1862-1885. 62 parts.
6. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. XLIV, 1853-1854. Contains a report of the visit of Sir George Bonham to Nanking in H. M. S. *Hermes*, 1853.
7. *Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. Each issue contained a *Journal of Occurrences* which is a valuable and authentic source of information, especially concerning matters of interest to foreigners. See no. 1, June, 1858, 353-368; no. 2, May, 1859, 248-256; no. 3, Dec., 1859, 353-368; vol. II, no. 1, 1860, 105-128, and new series, no. 1, Dec., 1864, 109-132.
8. *The Chinese Repository*. 20 vols. 1832-1851. The last two volumes contain information about the disturbances in Kwangsi. A valuable account of the Chinese army, from which I have drawn largely in chapter I, is published in vol. XX. This article by T. F. Wade is based on Chinese sources.



SOURCES: FOREIGN. II. Accounts of persons who were in China and came into personal contact with the insurgents.

1. Fishbourne, Captain, commander of the *Hermes* on her late visit to Nanking. *Impressions of China, and the Present Revolution: its Progress and its Prospects*. London, MDCCCLV.
2. Meadows, Thomas Taylor. *The Chinese and their Rebellion*. London, 1856. Mr. Meadows was in the British consular service and accompanied Sir George Bonham as an interpreter. In this capacity he saw something of the Tai-pings, and chapters XV-XVII are good source material for this period of the war.
3. Mercier, R. P. *Campagne du Cassini dans les mers de Chine, 1851-1854, d'après les rapports, lettres et notes du Commandant de Plas*, etc., Paris, 1889.
4. Lane-Poole, Stanley. *The Life of Sir Harry Parkes, sometime Her Majesty's Minister to China and Japan*. London and New York, 1894. In two volumes: I. Consul to China, S. Lane-Poole; II. Minister Plenipotentiary, Japan, F. V. Dickens, China, S. Lane-Poole.  
Sir Harry Parkes accompanied the minister to Hankow after the Treaty of 1860 and helped in the negotiations for opening ports of entry on the Yangtse River. He was also consul prior to that trip, and his letters to his wife are a valuable account of the period from the standpoint of a foreign observer.
5. Oliphant, Laurence. *Narrative of the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China and Japan in the years 1858, 1859*. New York, 1860.
6. Blakiston, T. W. *Five Months on the Yang-tsze*. With a narrative of the exploration of its upper waters, and notices of the present rebellions in China. London, 1862.  
Although the author went on the expedition up the Yangtse, the best parts of his description of life in the

Taiping capital rest on earlier accounts by R. J. Forrest. The book is readable but not profound.

7. Davis, Sir J. F., Bart. "View of the Great Valley of the Yangtse-Keang before and since its occupation by the Rebels." *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, 1859, pp. 164 ff.
8. John, Rev. Griffith. *The Rev. Griffith John's Experience of the Insurgents*. Canton, 1861.  
This is a pamphlet giving a portion of his letters published in the *Friend of China*. Some of the matter is reproduced in Sykes, W. H., *The Taiping Rebellion in China*.
9. John, Rev. Griffith, Biographies of.
  - (a) *The Story of Fifty Years in China*. R. Wardlaw Thompson. London, 1906. Popular edition, 1908. Chapter V, pp. 114-156, deals with the Taiping Rebellion.
  - (b) *Griffith John, Founder of the Hankow Mission*. William Robson, New York and Chicago. Chapter III, pp. 37-52, on the Rebellion.
  - (c) *The Story of Griffith John, the Apostle of Central China*. Nelson Bitton. Chapter IV, pp. 48-56, on the Taipings.
10. *The Taipings as They Are*. By "One of them." With an Introduction by Rev. J. W. Worthington, D.D., London, 1864.
11. "Lin Li" [Lindley, A. F.]. *Ti-ping T'ien-kwoh; the History of the Ti-ping Revolution including a Narrative of the Author's Personal Adventures*. 2 vols. London, 1866.  
The author is sympathetic towards the Taipings, under whom he served. He has collected all the favorable expressions of opinion that he could find. Many such expressions, originally scattered among inaccessible journals, can be read here. There are some evidences of untrustworthiness and a strong pro-Taiping bias is apparent throughout. If he is the same man who seized the *Firefly*

his conduct on that occasion would make him a doubtful character. His work is to be used with care, but where its statements can be checked up it is valuable.

12. Legge, Helen Edith. *James Legge, Missionary and Scholar*. London, 1905. Chapter VIII is on the Kanwang, Hung Jen-tah (Hung Jin).  
This eminent scholar deplored the decision to participate against the Taipings.
13. Moule, The Venerable Archdeacon. *Personal Recollections of the T'ai-ping Rebellion, 1861-1863*. Shanghai, 1898.  
The author states that he learned from Chinese sources that the last of the conquered Taipings settled down in the southwestern provinces, whence they were finally driven across the borders and became identified with the Black Flags of that region.
14. Moule, The Venerable Archdeacon. Ningpo Under the Taipings, 1861-1863. In *The East of Asia*, vol. V, nos. 1 and 2.
15. Yung Wing, *My Life in China and America*. New York, 1909.  
Chapters 9-13 deal with his travels to the interior, when he met both the Kanwang and Tsêng Kuo-fan at Anking. The former would have pressed Yung Wing into service under the Taiping rebels, but he entertained doubts of their success and preferred to seek employment under Tsêng Kuo-fan, whose greatness of character he perceived.
16. *Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi, Recueil périodique des lettres des évêques, et des missionnaires des missions des Deux Mondes, et de tous les documents relatifs aux missions et à l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi*. Lyons, Annually. Vols. XXIII-XXXVII should yield something.
17. Johnston, J. D., U.S.N. *China and Japan, being a narrative of the cruise of the steam frigate Powhatan*. Philadelphia, 1861.

Nothing definitely on the subject treated, but a general impression of China at this time.

18. de Moges, Marquis. *Baron Gros's Embassy to China and Japan in 1857-1858*. London and Glasgow, 1860.
19. Loch, Lord. *Personal Narrative of Occurrences during Lord Elgin's Second Embassy to China in 1860*. London, 1861.
20. Walrond, T. *Letters and Journals of Lord Elgin*. London, 1872.
21. Nevius, J. L. *China and the Chinese*. New York, 1869.  
This contains an account of the rebellion (chapter XVI, "The Taiping Rebellion," pp. 417-427), but it is not adequate.
22. Mitford, A. B. *The Attaché at Peking* London, 1900.  
Contains only a few scattered references here and there.
23. Rennie, D. F., M.D. *Peking and the Pekingese during the First Year of the British Embassy at Peking*. 2 vols. London, 1865.  
Contains a few scattered references to the rebellion.
24. [Scarth, John]. *Twelve Years in China. The People, the Rebels and the Mandarins*. Edinburgh and London, 1860.  
A brief account of the movement is given. Scarth mentions the problem of T'ienteh but does not attempt to solve it.
25. Foster, Rev. L. S. *Fifty Years in China. An Eventful Memoir of Tarleton Perry Crawford, D. D.* Nashville, 1909.  
A brief account is given in chapter XI of visits to places held by Taiping rebels, such as Soochow and Nanking, en route to Wuchang.
26. Edkins, Jane R. *Chinese Scenes and People, with notes of Christian Missions and Missionary Life in a series of letters from various parts of China. With a narrative of a*

*visit to Nanking by her husband, the Rev. Joseph Edkins, B. A.* London, 1863.

The later portion of this work (pp. 241-307) has special interest because it gives a firsthand account of things as they appeared to this missionary just before the policy of intervention was adopted.

27. Edkins, Joseph. *Religion in China*. 2d ed. London, 1878. The treatment of the Taiping religion is valuable because Edkins secured his interpretations from the insurgents themselves.

28. Cooke, George Wingrove. *China in 1857-1858*. From his letters to the *Times*.  
Most of these letters are occupied with other matters than the rebellion.

29. Forrester, Edward. "Personal Recollections of the Taiping Rebellion." *Cosmopolitan*, XXI, 625 ff., XXII, 34 ff., 209 ff. (1896).

Since Forrester was second in command under Ward at the formative period of the "Ever Victorious Army" these recollections are very interesting, and furnish many details. Among other things he brings out strongly the intense hostility of the British to the enterprise, so much so that even the wounded could not be sent to Shanghai, and British were sent out to recapture deserters, etc.

30. James, W. H., "Recollections of the Chinese War of 1860." *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. 71, pp. 241 f.

31. *The Missionary Herald*, vol. 56, 1860, pp. 369-372; *ibid.*, vol. 57, pp. 88-91 and 118.

Letters from Dr. Bridgman describing his trip and those of others to Soochow or Nanking, and the opinions they formed about the rebellion at the time it was spreading to the coast. They picture the Kanwang as desiring to be friendly and enter into relations with Western nations and introduce modern civilisation into China. Among the reports are those of Holmes, Crawford, and Hartwell, who

had been to Soochow, and Muirhead, Edkins, John Macgowen, and Hall (of the L. M. S.) and Burden (of the C. M. S.), who had apparently been in Nanking itself.

### III

#### SECONDARY WORKS

##### A. ON THE TAIPING REBELLION, CHINESE AND JAPANESE.

1. *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh* (Record of the Suppression of the Yueh Rebels). Compiled under the direction of Li Hung-chang. Eighteen parts, bound in seven volumes, with a supplementary volume containing four parts. This is the standard history of the Taiping rebellion, and appears to be accurate and trustworthy. The supplementary volumes give much interesting material about the institutions of the Taipings, superstitions regarding the rebellion, miraculous happenings, etc. 1871.
2. *Yueh Fen Chi Shih* (Record of the Yueh Rebellion). Thirteen books in six volumes. 1869.  
Like the above, accurate, but with especial interest for military details and with lists of those killed in action, together with their official rank. It generally lists the regiments participating in engagements. It is also arranged geographically rather than chronologically as is the other. It extends as far as 1860.
3. Sone, Toshitora. *Hatsuzoku Ran Shi* (Japanese History of the Haired Rebel Insurrection), 1879. Published in a collection of historical books on China, *Tsu Zoku Nijiuchi Shi*, edited by Waseda University, vol. XII.  
The author claims to have spent some time in China and to have used the *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, also *P'ing Nien Chi*, *P'ing Che Chi*, *Wu Chung K'ou P'ing Chi*, and, from European writers, the books of Mossman and another whose name I cannot make out from the Chinese characters. These he translates and elaborates upon, basing his account, however, chiefly upon the first-named work.

He often includes details not met in the standard history, and one may well be on guard; but in general wherever he can be checked up he proves to be accurate. On relations with Western countries he has either had poor sources or misunderstood some of the statements made on one or two points, but these defects detract very little from the value of the book.

4. *Siang Chun Chi*. Account of the Siang (Hunan) Army, edited by Wang Ting-an, 1889. Twenty books, in eleven volumes.

The first thirteen books deal with the Taiping rebellion; the others with the Nien and Mohammedan rebellions. The work as a whole covers the separate campaigns as units and is quite accurate, being based on original documents.

5. *Siang Chun Chih* (History of the Siang Army). Sixteen books in four volumes. Thirteen books are devoted to the Taiping rebellion, one to the Nien rebellion, the other two to various details concerning the organisation and support of the forces.

Contains innumerable details of a picturesque type, many of them not found elsewhere. I cannot discover who is the author or exactly when the work was published, and have therefore made little or no use of it, fearing that most of the stories preserved were mere tales and rumors resting on gossip.

6. *Yu Chun Chi-lueh*, Records of the Honan Army. Twelve books in five volumes, of which the first has to do with the Taipings and the others with various groups of rebels and bandits. Compiled by a board consisting of two chief editors and three assistants. 1877.

7. Ch'ien Hsu. *Wu Chung P'ing K'ou Chi*. The Pacification of Central Kiangsu. Eight booklets bound in two small volumes, 1875.

8. *P'ing Che Chi-lueh*. The Pacification of Chekiang. Sixteen booklets in four volumes. Published under Yang Chang-chun, governor of Chekiang. 1875.

Two works having to do with the operations in these two provinces after 1860.

9. *Hung Siu-ch'üan Yen I*. The story of Hung Siu-ch'üan. To be classed only in part as history; written from the standpoint of one who considered the uprising as a patriotic movement which was frustrated. 1914.
10. *Tung Cheng Chi-lueh*. Story of the Eastern Expedition, 1899.
11. *Liang Wang yu Yueh Ta Sha Han-jen Chi*. Great Slaughter of the Chinese when the Two Wangs Entered Yueh. This tells of some of the happenings when the scattered rebels entered Kwangtung and were hunted down by the Imperialists. Date uncertain.

#### B. ON THE TAIPING REBELLION OR SOME PHASE OF IT.

##### I. Books Devoted to the Movement, particularly the Earlier Phases.

1. Vizetelly, Henry. *The Chinese Revolution: The causes which led to it—its rapid progress and anticipated result; with abstracts of all the known publications emanating from the insurgents. The whole derived from native proclamations and other documents, missionary narratives, official communications, and the letters of European residents*. London, 1853.
2. Callery et Yvan.
  - (a) *L'Insurrection en Chine depuis son origine jusqu'à la prise de Nankin*, etc., Paris, 1853.
  - (b) *History of the Insurrection in China; with notices of the Christianity, Creed, and Proclamations of the Insurgents by MM. Callery and Yvan, Translated from the French, with a supplementary chapter, narrating the most recent events, by John Oxenford*. With a facsimile of a Chinese map, and a portrait of Tien-te, its Chief. 2d ed. London, 1858.



- (c) *Idem*, translated into Portuguese.
- (d) *Idem*, translated into German, 1854.
3. McFarlane, Charles. *The Chinese Revolution, with Details of the Habits, Manners and Customs of China and the Chinese*. London, 1853.
  4. Hamberg, Rev. Theodore. *The Chinese Rebel Chief, Hung-siu-tsuen; and the Origin of the Insurrection in China*. With an Introduction by George Pearse, Hon. Foreign Secretary to Chinese Evangelizing Society. London, MDCCCLV.
  5. *Idem* (Translation by Alphonse Viollet). *Histoire du Chef de l'Insurrection chinoise, Hung-siu-tsuen et origine de cette insurrection, par le Reverend Theodore Hamberg, Missionnaire de la Société évangélique de Bâle*.  
I have not been able to secure these two works, but they are probably identical with the book listed as a source above.
  6. Biornatzki, K. L. *Die gegenwertige politisch-religiose Bewegung in China*. Berlin, 1854.
  7. Neumark, J. *Die Revolution in China in ihrer Entstehung, ihrer politischen und religiösen Bedeutung und ihrem bisherigen Verlauf, nebst Darstellung des auf christliche Grundlage beruhenden Religionssystems der Insurgenten. Nach Meadows'*: *The Chinese and Their Rebellions*. Berlin, 1857.
  8. Pfizmaier, August. *Ein Gedicht des chinesischen Gegenkaisers*. Wien, 1859.
  9. Krone, R. "Gegenwartiger Stand der Revolution in China." Petermann's *Mittheilungen*, 1856, pp. 462-465.
  10. Haussmann, A., formerly Chancellor of the French Legation in China. *La Chine. Résumé historique de l'insurrection et des événements qui ont eu lieu dans ce pays depuis le commencement de la guerre de l'opium*

*jusqu'en 1857; illustré par Charles Mettais, accompagné d'une nouvelle carte de la Chine, par A. H. Dufour.* Paris, 1858.

11. Mackie, J. M. *Life of Taiping-wang, Chief of the Chinese Insurrection.* New York. Harpers, 1857.  
Contains a number of insurgent documents.

12. Brine, Lindesay. *The Taeping Rebellion in China; a Narrative of its Rise and Progress, Based upon original documents and information obtained in China.* London, 1862.

The appendix contains several insurgent documents and a number occur in the text. I consider this one of the best works dealing with the rebellion.

13. Forrest, Robert James, Esq. "The Christianity of Hung Tsiu Tsuen, a Review of Taeping Books." *Journal North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, December, 1867, pp. 187 ff.

14. The-Rule, Armand. *Les Tai-Pings.* Rouen, 1869.

15. Oehler, Wilhelm, *Die Taiping-Bewegung. Geschichte eines chinesisch-christlichen Gottereichs.* Gütersloh, 1923.  
A recent work based almost entirely upon materials in European languages which are already well known to students of the subject. Its chief value lies in pointing out the place that Chinese religious ideas and customs played in the religious side of the movement. The author was for some years in southern China as a missionary. His sympathies are, in the main, with Hung.

## II. General Histories, Monographs, or works of a more general character.

1. Boulger, Demetrius C. *The History of China.* 2 vols. London, 1890.

Boulger recognises that Tsêng Kuo-fan opposed the rebels, but supposed that it was in their first march through Hunan. Consequently he sends Tsêng off on

the pursuit of the Taipings at once and antedates the Kiangsi campaign by two years. He has many errors in the later course of the story, but is on solid ground in the Kiangsu campaign. He is very readable.

2. Brinkley, Capt. F. *China, Its History, Arts and Literature*. 1902. Vols. 9-12 in the Oriental Series.

Useless for this period.

3. Cordier, Henri. *Histoire générale de la Chine*. 4 vols. Paris, 1922.

4. Cordier, Henri. *Histoire des relations de la Chine avec les puissances occidentales*. 1860-1890. 3 vols. Paris, 1901-1902.

This has little on the earlier part of the movement but describes in brief compass the last period of its suppression.

5. Foster, John W. *American Diplomacy in the Orient*, New York, 1903.

A brief but excellent sketch of American official relations with the Taipings.

6. Douglas, R. K. *China*. (In the Stories of the Nations). New York, 1899.

Popular. Entirely misconceives the character of Tsêng, whom he supposes to have been a full-fledged military commander.

7. Macgowan, Rev. J. *The Imperial History of China*. 2d ed. Shanghai, 1906.

A work supposedly based on Chinese sources, but the portion on the Taiping rebellion is apparently an exception and there is little of it.

8. Pott, F. L. Hawks. *A Sketch of Chinese History*. Shanghai, 1903.

Practically omits the crucial period 1854-1860, and contains various errors, though the author recognises that in some sense Tsêng was the hero.

9. Li Ung-bing. *Outlines of Chinese History*, Shanghai, 1914.  
Brief but good on the Taiping period. Though it contains some errors, it is the only account in a general history that places Tsêng in his proper place.
10. Satow, Sir Ernest. "The Far East," chapter XXVIII in *The Cambridge Modern History*, XI, pp. 821 f.  
Two paragraphs only are devoted to this great insurrection!
11. Williams, S. Wells. *The Middle Kingdom* (revised edition), 2 vols. New York, 1883.  
Vol. II, chapter XIV, pp. 575-624, deals with the Taiping rebellion. There is nothing for the years 1854-1860 except what has been gathered from the Chungwang's *Autobiography*. This is very well done.
12. Williams, S. Wells. *A History of China, being the Historical Chapters from The Middle Kingdom*. Edited by F. W. Williams, with an additional chapter to bring it down to date. New York, 1897.
13. Howard, W. C. *A Short Sketch of the Taeping Rebellion, 1848-1860*. Shanghai, 1901.  
This sketch has the same fault as some of the others in laying stress on the first and last phases of the movement and saying nothing about the middle period.
14. Spielmann, Dr. C. *Die Taiping-Revolution in China (1850 bis 1864)*. Halle, 1900.
15. Yates, Rev. M. T., D.D. *The T'ai Ping Rebellion*. A Lecture delivered at the Temperance Hall for the benefit of the Shanghai Temperance Society. Shanghai, 1876.
16. Escayrac de Lauture, Cte. d'. *Considerations sur le passé et l'avenir de la Chine. Examen de la Rébellion actuelle par le Cte. d'Escayrac de Lauture. Mémoire lu à l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques dans la séance du 21 juin 1862*.

17. Morse, H. B. *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*. 3 vols., I, 1910; II and III, 1918.  
Fairly good account of the rebellion, especially of the "Ever Victorious Army" and its campaigns. Not based on Chinese sources.
18. Morse, H. B. *The Trade and Administration of China*. 2d ed. London, 1912.  
Contains an account of the rebellion, but not as good as that in his later work.
19. Nye, G. *The Rationale of the China Question: comprising an Inquiry into the Repressive Policy of the Imperial Government, with Considerations of the Duties of the 3 Treaty Powers, England, France, and America, in regard to it and a glance at the Origin of the 1st and 2nd Wars with China, with Incidental Notices of the Rebellion*. By an American. Macao, 1857.  
The amount of material given on the rebellion is very slight.
20. Bland, J. O. P., and Backhouse, E. *China under the Empress Dowager*, London, 1910.  
Chapter V, pp. 64-80, contains translations from the long report of victory; also an account of one of the interviews with the empress dowager.
21. "Kuan Wen, late Viceroy of Hupeh and Hunan, subsequently First Minister at Peking. Biographical Sketches and Incidents of the Taipin Rebellion." Extracted from the Chinese of Kuan Wen. Shanghai, 1871.
22. Martin, W. A. P. *The Awakening of China*. New York, 1907.  
Pages 157-162 contain a brief sketch of the rebellion.
23. Martin, W. A. P. *A Cycle of Cathay*. New York, 1900.  
At page 101 Martin expresses his regret that the policy of intervention was ever adopted. He attributes the adoption to French influence, due to Roman Catholic

missionaries who hated the Protestant antecedents of the Taiping religion.

24. Sykes, Col. W. H., F.R.S., M.P. *The Taeping Rebellion in China, its Origin, Progress and Present Condition*, in a series of letters addressed to the *Aberdeen Free Press* and the *London Daily News*.  
Opposes the government policy of intervention.
25. Sykes, Col. W. H. China. "Speech of Col. W. H. Sykes, M.P., in the House of Commons, on Tuesday, March 12, 1861." Extracted from Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. CLXI (1861), p. 1841.
26. Debate in the House of Commons. *Ibid.*, vol. CLXXII (1863), pp. 270-330.
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De Groot advances the theory that the rebellion arose out of the persecutions of the government directed against heresies which drove the desperate people to revolt. In particular he traces the movement to persecutions of a sectarian character in Hunan in 1836 and the years following. The subsequent union of various persecuted groups resulted in the movement. He rejects Hamberg's account of Hung's visions, which he considers to be Hamberg's visions. The fact that we are not dependent on Hamberg alone for this account, but find it in the writings of the Taipings themselves, and the dominance of an inadequate but definite Chris-

tian element in the Taiping teachings cannot be accounted for on the author's theory. Moreover, granting the fact of persecutions which he asserts, we have the further well-known fact that practically all revolutionary movements in China germinated in fraternal or religious societies. According to Hung Ta-ch'ian, Hung was using his powers to gather not simple Christians but revolutionaries, and all trustworthy accounts show the same thing. In most of these persecutions religion itself was not opposed as much as was the use of religion to cloak rebellious plots.

31. Hermann, Heinrich. *Chinesische Geschichte*. Stuttgart, 1912.  
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32. Davis, Sir John Francis. *China: A General Description of that Empire and its Inhabitants* (revised ed.). London, 1857.
33. Gowan, H. H. *An Outline History of China*. Boston, 1913.
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35. Latourette, K. S. *The Development of China*. New York, 1917.
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37. Wolferstan, Rev. B., S.J. *The Catholic Church in China*. Edinburgh and St. Louis, 1909.  
On pages 104-107 there is a discussion of Taiping Christianity and the Bible.
38. Dennett, Tyler. *Americans in Eastern Asia*. New York, 1922.

III. Works dealing wholly or in part with the last days of the movement, particularly with the Kiangsu and Chekiang campaigns and foreign intervention.

(a) Shanghai.

1. *Suppression of the Taiping Rebellion in the Departments around Shanghai.* Shanghai, 1871.
2. de Jesus, Montaldo. *Historic Shanghai.* Shanghai, 1909.  
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3. McClellan, J. W. *The Story of Shanghai.* Shanghai, 1889.  
An excellent little book.
4. Michie, A. *The Englishman in China during the Victorian Era, as illustrated in the career of Sir Rutherford Alcock.* 2 vols. Edinburgh and London, 1900.  
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(b) The "Ever Victorious Army."

1. Rantoul, Robert S. *Frederick Townsend Ward.* Salem, Mass., 1908.
2. Macgowan, Dr. D. J. "Memoirs of Generals Ward, Burgevine, and of the Ever Conquering Legion." In *The Far East*, 1877.
3. Wilson, A. *The "Ever Victorious Army." A History of the Chinese Campaign under Lt. Col. C. G. Gordon, C.B.R.E. and of the Suppression of the Taiping Rebellion.* Edinburgh and London, 1868.
4. Boulger, D. C. *Life of Sir Halliday Macartney, K.C.M.G.* London and New York, 1908.



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(c) General Gordon.

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2. Barnes, Reginald H., Vicar of Heavitree, and Brown, Charles E., Major, R.A. *Charles George Gordon, A Sketch.* London, 1885.
3. Boulger, D. C. *Life of Gordon*, 2 vols. London, 1896.
4. Bioves, Achille. *Un Grand Aventurier du XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle—Gordon Pacha.*
5. Butler, Col. Sir William F. *Charles George Gordon.* English Men of Action Series, vol. 1. London, 1889.
6. Chesney, Col. Charles Cornwallis. *Essays in Modern Military Biography*, the sixth Essay, pp. 163-203, on "Chinese Gordon and the Tai Ping Rebellion." London, 1874.
7. Forbes, Archibald. *Chinese Gordon, A Succinct Record of his Life.* (12th ed.) London, 1886.
8. Gordon, Henry William. *Events in the Life of Charles George Gordon from its Beginning to its End.* London, 1886.
9. Hake, A. Egmont. *The Story of Chinese Gordon* (7th ed.). 2 vols. 1884, 1885.
10. Hake, A. Egmont. *Events in the Taeping Rebellion. Being Reprints of Manuscripts copied by General*

*Gordon, C.B., in his own handwriting with Monograph, Introduction and Notes.* London, 1891.

11. Kingdon, Abraham. *Gordon the Christian Hero. A Book for the Young.* London, 1885.
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14. Dr. Macaulay. *Gordon Anecdotes. A Sketch of the Career, with illustrations of the Character of Chas. G. Gordon, R.E.* London, 1885.
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16. Mossman, Samuel. *General Gordon's Private Dairy of his Exploits in China; amplified by Samuel Mossman, editor of the North China Herald during Gordon's Suppression of the Taiping Rebellion.* London, 1885.
17. Strachey, Lytton. *Eminent Victorians.* New York, 1917.  
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18. Swaine, Rev. S. A. *The World's Workers—General Gordon.* London, 1885.
19. Vetch, Col. R. H., C.B. *Gordon's Campaign in China. By Himself. With an Introduction and a short account of the Tai-Ping Rebellion.* London, 1900.

This essay first appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* for September and October, 1900. Vetch maintains that Mossman's work is mere bookmaking and that Wilson, *The "Ever Victorious Army,"* though full of irrelevancies, is the best book on Gordon's campaigns.

(d) French Campaigns.

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2. de Moidrey, Tardiff. *Notice sur les campagnes et opérations militaires faites en Chine*. Metz, 1854.
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Cordier states that the author is Mgr. Reynaud.

(e) Li Hung-chang.

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3. Little, Mrs. Archibald. *Li Hung-chang. His Life and Times*. London, 1903.  
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5. Periodical articles on Li Hung-chang.
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- (b) Michie, A. "Li Hung-chang." *Nineteenth Century*, vol. XL, August, 1896, pp. 226-239.
- (c) *Ibid.*, "Li Hung-chang." *Blackwood's Magazine*, CLXX, December, 1901, pp. 836-851.
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4. Fay, Miss L. M. "The Last Days of Tseng-Kuo-fan." Translated from the *Peking Gazette*. *The Phoenix*, no. 29, November, 1872.
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V. For additional articles on the movement as a whole, in Periodicals or the Annual Publications of Learned Societies, see Cordier's *Bibliotheca Sinica*, and Poole's *Index*.



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